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ABSTRACT

The project that yielded this report developed a framework for the University of Alberta's library to guide the activities of the self-study portion of the university's Presidential Advisory Committee on Campus Review (PACCR). The framework demonstrates how the review process can be adapted to meet the particular needs of the library while remaining within the PACCR guidelines. It consists of both content and process elements, including an overall philosophical approach, functions and services to be reviewed, groups and individuals to be consulted, and other details. The framework indicates where procedures are needed rather than prescribing specific procedures. Three particularly significant topics in developing the framework were identified as the PACCR review process, evaluation processes generally, and the opinions of library staff as defined by reviews of PACCR documents. The literature on evaluation processes is described and discussions and interviews with library staff are included. The proposed framework is appended. Seven figures accompany the text. (87 references) (SD)

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A FRAMEWORK FOR THE SELF-STUDY PORTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY SYSTEM REVIEW TO BE CARRIED OUT FOR THE PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CAMPUS REVIEWS (PACCR)

BY

GRANT KAYLER

A MAJOR PROJECT SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

A. BACKGROUND

The University of Alberta is currently engaged in a campus-wide review process. This process is being conducted by the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Reviews, or PACCR. The aim of the review process, broadly stated, is "to seek ways of serving the public interest as effectively as possible" and "to enhance constructive change" (Enns, 1988: 3) to assist the university in performing effectively its teaching, research, and public service activities. The process is also expected to produce information that will serve as a reliable basis for planning (University of Alberta, Joint Committee of the Academic Development Committee and Dean's Council, 1980: 1). Each academic, service, or other type of unit must conduct a review according to the PACCR guidelines. The process was begun in the early 1980s, and the first round of reviews will likely continue until the end of the decade. The library system, a distinct unit of the university, is expected to carry out a PACCR review. Current expectations are that the library will initiate its review during 1988.

A number of factors suggested that the library's PACCR review would be a complex and time-consuming process. The library is large and administratively complex, combining both centralized and decentralized functions. It supports the teaching, research, and public service functions of the university and carries out a number of its own instructional and research activities. In carrying out its essential operations,

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it participates in a variety of external networks that are not under its direct control but have a significant impact on the efficiency of its operations. There are also increasing demands on library staff time by users; their numbers are growing and their needs are becoming more sophisticated.

Given these considerations, senior administrators of the library system believed that the development of a framework would help significantly in planning and implementing the review. Discussion among the library's area co-ordinators indicated their support. Other planning processes were underway. A Board of Governors report, The Next Decade and Beyond: a Plan for the Future, proposed university-wide priorities that would have major implications for the library. The library had also recently studied its own planning process. The framework would be designed with these other processes in mind.

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B. PURPOSE

The specific purpose of the project was to develop a framework which the library could use to guide the activities of the self-study portion of its PACCR review. The framework would show how the review process could be adapted to meet the particular needs of the library while remaining within the PACCR guidelines. It would consist of both content and process elements, including an overall philosophical approach, functions and services to be reviewed, groups and individuals to be consulted, and other details. The framework would not attempt to prescribe a whole range of specific procedures. Instead, it would indicate where they would be needed or suggest examples. Establishing detailed procedures would be the responsibility of library

staff as part of conducting the self-study.

C. PROJECT DESIGN

Three topics were particularly significant in developing the framework: The PACCR process, evaluation processes generally, and the opinions of library staff. Three sources of data corresponding to each topic were identified: PACCR documents and the Chairperson; the literature on evaluation processes, post-secondary review, and academic library evaluation; and senior library staff - the area co-ordinators, division heads, and Chief Librarian.

A first draft of the framework (Appendix B.) was developed and circulated to senior library staff for reactions. In this way the framework was developed on an interactive basis with staff and refined as ideas emerged. The specific phases of the project were as follows:

1. gaining authorization for the project from library administration
2. data gathering
3. developing a first draft of the framework
4. obtaining reactions to the first draft
5. developing a revised framework
6. presenting the full report and revised framework to library administration

The activities carried out in each of these phases are described below.

1. Authorization

The author, his staff advisor, and the Chief Librarian met in the fall of 1986 to discuss the project and establish general parameters. Authorization for the project was obtain-

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ed from the Chief Librarian at that time. He suggested that the project not attempt to establish too detailed a framework, as this might raise concerns among staff as to how it would be applied and possibly result in a lack of co-operation. He also indicated the framework would be viewed as only one of a number of possibilities, and that the library would not be bound to follow its proposals. Library staff were made aware of this in order to remove concerns that the the framework might be used without input on their part. It was also established that staff consent to be interviewed would be voluntary. A one-page summary of the proposal was distributed to the seven area co-ordinators.

2. Data Gathering for the First Draft

Data gathering began with a review of what the PACCR process consisted of and how it was to be carried out. During two meetings in late 1986 and early 1987, the Chairperson of PACCR provided the author with a general overview of the process and made available the main documents issued by PACCR describing the reviews. These documents contained references to articles in the post-secondary literature written by University of Alberta staff that further described the process. From these interviews, documents, and articles a basic understanding of the process was gained.

During the fall and winter of 1986-87, a review of the literature relating to evaluation processes generally was carried out. It was hoped that the literature would suggest review procedures that had been found to be useful in the wider academic and library communities. Three related areas of the literature were examined: evaluation processes

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generally, post-secondary institution review, and academic library evaluation.

3. Developing the First Draft

The first draft (Appendix B.) was developed from the information about PACCR reviews, the literature on evaluation processes, and the author's own understanding of the library system. The first draft also reflected the suggestion of the Chief Librarian and staff advisor that the framework focus on the larger issues. The purpose of the first draft was to stimulate interest in the PACCR process generally and to facilitate discussion by providing library staff with a proposed plan to examine and discuss. Completed in May 1987, the first draft was given to the Chief Librarian, staff advisor, and project advisor for their initial review and comment. Based on their review, the draft was approved for circulation among selected library staff for their reaction. In order to encourage staff input, the framework indicated clearly that its proposals were tentative.

4. Obtaining Reactions to the First Draft

The next stage of the project, conducted during the summer and fall of 1987, consisted of interviews with area co-ordinators and division heads who reported to the Chief Librarian to receive their reactions to the draft framework and suggestions for improvement. An interview guide was used (Appendix A.). Interviews generally lasted from one to one-and-a-half hours. Interviewees were encouraged to comment on aspects not covered by the interview guide, but in most cases it was

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sufficient. Notes taken during each interview were reviewed afterwards to clarify and consolidate the data and identify key ideas. Responses were organized into topics corresponding to the interview questions or other topics that emerged. It was possible to identify the number of occurrences of the various responses to each question and to determine if a consensus existed among them or if any differed considerably from the others. The use of open-ended questions allowed for flexibility in the structure of the interivews and variety in responses.

5. Developing the Revised Framework

The data from the interviews yielded a number of useful findings which were incorporated into the revised draft of the framework. Key concepts from the literature that were introduced in the first draft and were compatible with the interview data - e.g. the systems model - were expanded. The revised draft comprises Chapter III of the report and constitutes the recommendations of the project. It should be noted that the illustrations of the systems model that apply directly to the library system (Figures 5. and 6.) were not included in the first draft.

6. Presenting the Final Report to Library Administration

The full project report and revised framework were presented to the Chief Librarian, staff advisor, and project advisor in the spring of 1988. A decision regarding distribution of the framework to library staff has not yet been made.

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D. LIMITATIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

The project focussed on the review process of the University of Alberta and on its library system and is thus limited by the guidelines of that process and the needs of the library system. It is also limited by the guidelines established by the Chief Librarian for conducting the project. The framework is therefore directly applicable only to the University of Alberta library and not necessarily to other university libraries.

E. OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

The report consists of a review of the literature, the views of library staff, a discussion of how the data from the literature and staff were applied in developing the framework, the first draft and revised version, the conclusions of the project, references, and appendices.

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CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature that describes the PACCR process specifically and evaluation processes generally for data of potential application to the framework.

A. THE PACCR PROCESS

Enns et al. (1988: 7-15), authors of the primary document issued by PACCR, indicate that the full review process consists of four main phases:

1. self-study, conducted by the unit
2. external review, conducted by a Unit Review Committee (URC)
3. clearance of the URC report and response by the unit
4. follow-up.

The self-study results in a report, usually about one hun- one hundred pages in length, which serves as the primary document for the next stage, an external review by the Unit Review Committee (URC). The URC normally consists of four members, two from outside the university from the same discipline, one internal member from a related discipline, and one internal member from the university-at-large. A fifth member from the profession may be included. The URC review is short - usually only several days - but intensive, and results in a second report. The URC report is presented by PACCR to the President. Once the URC report receives clearance by the President, the unit reviews it and writes

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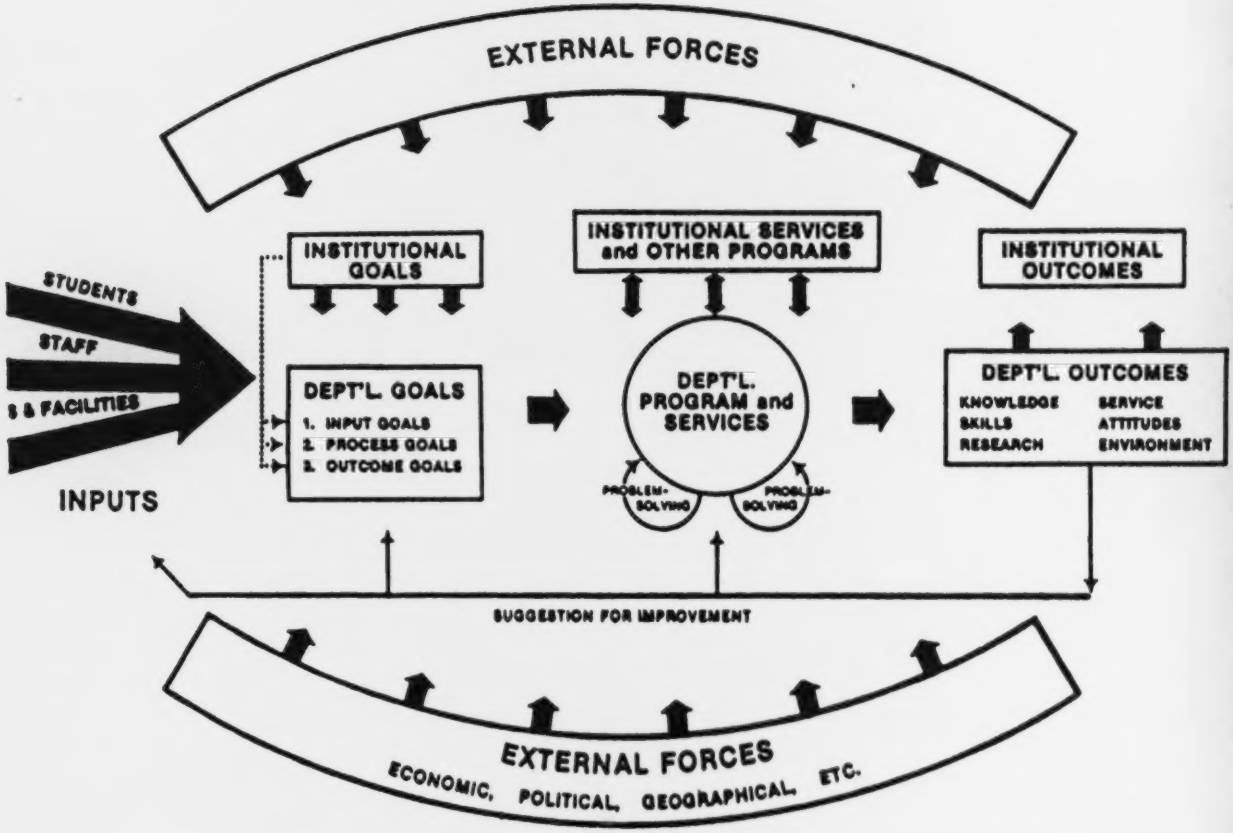

Figure 2.

Open Systems Model for a
Department or Program of a

Post-Secondary Institution

a response report. PACCR then summarizes all three reports (self-study, URC report, and the unit's response report) and submits its summary and the three reports to the President. Follow-up action is initiated by the President, in consultation with the head of the unit, PACCR, the appropriate Vice-President, and the Planning and Priorities Committee. The full process is illustrated in Figure 1.

PACCR has established guidelines regarding the topics to be examined during the self-study and the overall philosophical approach that should be taken. With respect to the topics, the unit is asked to examine its history, current status, impending changes, strengths, weaknesses or limitations, and areas for improvement with strategies for such improvement, and to consider them with a strong emphasis on the future. Philosophical guidelines are expressed in terms of "operational components" which are not prescriptive as such but indicate clearly that certain kinds of procedures are more suitable than others. The first operational component is measurement. It is considered to be the most basic component of the self-study, of minor importance overall, and not to impede the process of getting at the larger issues. The next component is evaluation. For PACCR, evaluation is the process of making informed judgments. While it is considered to be more important than measurement, is is also viewed as a possible impediment to getting at the larger issues by its tendency, in PACCR's opinion, to emphasize technical details over substantive issues. These criticisms might be viewed not as an actual rejection of measurement and evaluation, but rather as advice that if they are used, they be applied in an efficient and flexible manner that fac-

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ilitates a qualitative examination of the larger issues. The key objective is program improvement - how the unit can deal constructively with change, meet the challenges of the future, and serve public interest more effectively (Enns, 1983: 3-6). PACCR is also concerned with the issue of program quality, as seen in the statement that "firm and meaningful decisions can in fact be made on the basis of informed judgment of academic quality" (Enns, 1985: 5), which suggests that the review consider the question of program quality.

In addition to this official PACCR document, a number of articles which describe further how the reviews work have been written in the post-secondary literature by University of Alberta staff. Holdaway (1981), Harris and Holdaway (1983), and Enns et al. (1986), describe different aspects of the history, procedures, and potential benefits of the PACCR process as a tool for institutional renewal. These articles enhance our understanding of the process by exploring some of the issues that have arisen during other reviews. Harris and Holdaway (1983: 72-73) point out, for example, that reviews of service units (such as the library) tend to differ from those of academic departments. A service unit often performs a greater variety of functions and interacts with a larger number of other units than does the typical academic department, with the result that these other units often wish to have more input into the review of a service unit than they would into the review of an academic department.

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B. EVALUATION PROCESSES

1. Traditional and Non-Traditional Approaches

A key component of traditional models of evaluation, dev-

eloped by such authors as Stake (1967), Provus (1969), and Stufflebeam (1971), is discrepancy analysis, in which the intentions or aims of an activity, as stated by its goals and objectives, are compared against actual outcomes to determine if there is a discrepancy between what is desired and what is achieved. Several of the traditional evaluation models also incorporate elements of systems analysis. A closed system views an activity as consisting of inputs, processes, and outputs; an open system adds an environmental context that influences the inputs, processes, and outputs of the system (Owens, 1981: 63-67). Both Stake (1967) and Stufflebeam (1971) include elements of the systems analysis in the models they develop. For example, Stake (p. 113) analyzes the activity being reviewed in terms of antecedents, transactions, and outcomes. In terms of an evaluation, an open systems analysis would help to determine if the inputs of an activity being evaluated were appropriate and adequate to accomplish its aims; if its internal processes were efficient; and if its outputs did in fact achieve the goals set for the activity and meet the demands of the environment. Use of a systems analysis does not need to bind an organization to specific measurement and questioning procedures. On the contrary, its generalized structure for relating organizational components to one another and to the external environment is actually quite flexible and can be applied to many different situations.

The naturalistic approach to evaluation is a non-traditional approach described by Hurteau and Nadeau (1985: 5). It places more emphasis on the actual activities than on their intents; responds to the values of different participants in making judgments; uses the situation being studied to determ-

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ine the structure of the inquiry and modify it as it progresses; and makes use of any instruments that allow the necessary data to be collected. A naturalistic approach has the potential to elicit underlying human concerns, encourage different value positions, concerns, and issues to emerge, and allow the design of an evaluation to evolve as the needs of the organization emerge (Guba and Lincoln, 1981: 29-36). A naturalistic inquiry may be demanding on participants, requiring considerable personal and professional skill due to its responsiveness and the variety of data it is able to elicit from the different stakeholders (Hurteau and Nadeau, 1985: 14). Effective procedures for communicating among participants and resolving concerns that arise are therefore important in a naturalistic review.

Other non-traditional, qualitative approaches are explored. Stake (1983: 279-286) indicates that a case study can be used to develop a detailed description of a program, to achieve a deeper understanding of its activities, and to make a naturalistic generalization - i.e. to a similar case rather than to a population of cases. Cook and Reichardt (1979: 21-24) discuss using quantitative and qualitative methods in the same evaluation. They suggest, for example, monitoring a program using qualitative methods and assessing its impact using quantitative methods. They also suggest that randomized experiments could be conducted using participant observers as the measuring instruments.

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2. Post-Secondary Review

The literature on post-secondary review was also examined for ideas on conducting the self-study. The ideas are intended to help establish a context of accepted procedures within which a self-study of a particular component of an

institution can take place.

One of the more frequent observations is that the self-evaluating institution must pay close attention to the impact of the environment on its activities (e.g. O'Brien and Walters, 1983; Adelman, 1982; Wilson, 1982; Halstead, 1984). Environment can be viewed in concrete terms, such as the availability of funds or competing institutions; or it can be interpreted more subjectively as, for example, the organizational culture of an institution or the political environment of the funding province. Another frequent observation is that good communication among participants in the self-study is essential for collecting and interpreting the data and making effective use of the findings (Craven, 1980; Wilson, 1982; Braskamp, 1982; Smock, 1982).

In terms of overall methodology for carrying out a self-study, there is also considerable interest in post-secondary literature in the naturalistic approach. Lincoln (1986), for example, suggests that the socio-political emphasis and flexible, emergent design of the naturalistic inquiry are well-suited to deal with certain characteristics of post-secondary institutions: the pluralistic value positions of their members, varied power distribution within their structures, and the presence of politics in their decision-making processes. Other writers have recommended that reviews be concerned with program quality and the different perspectives stakeholders have respecting quality (e.g. Braskamp, 1982; Wilson, 1982; Lincoln, 1986). Quantitative measures are at best only part of the criteria for determining quality. While they are attractive due to their explicitness, they are, in the opinion of Braskamp (1982: 60-61),

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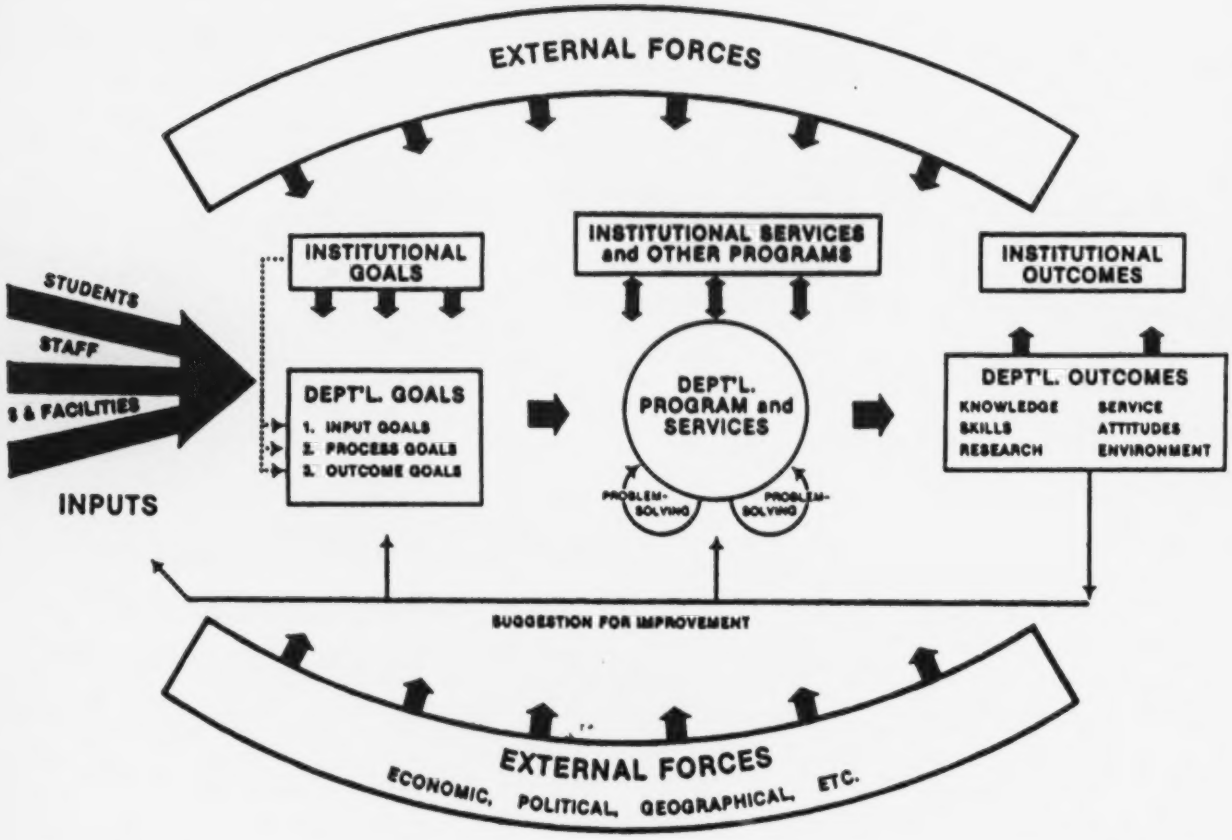

Figure 2.

Open Systems Model for a
Department or Program of a

Post-Secondary Institution

somewhat limited in their ability to convey the unique, distinguishing features of an organization. Quality is a more complex concept that relates to the value positions of different stakeholders. The review process should be able to work with subjective data, a process which can be carried out effectively using a naturalistic, qualitative approach.

In terms of organizing the self-study, O'Brien and Walters (1983) recommend the use of carefully chosen themes that are relevant to the institution as a whole and which may help to overcome departmental boundaries.

The systems model, introduced in the previous section as a feature of traditional evaluation models, is adapted by Kells (1983: 84) for use in the self-study of a specific program or department of a post-secondary institution to help identify the program's components and their interrelationships. A detailed illustration of Kells' adaptation appears in Figure 2. His model consists of students, staff, financial resources, and facilities as inputs; the department's goals, programs, and services as processes; and knowledge, skills, research, service, and related outcomes as the system's outputs. The influence of environmental factors, including the goals, objectives, and activities of the parent institution, is accounted for in the model. Various feedback loops are indicated where problem-solving processes may be required.

A major post-secondary planning and review process is currently in progress at the University of Alberta, and is of particular significance to the library's PACCR review. The two documents it has produced so far - The Next Decade and Beyond: a Plan for the Future (The University of Alberta,

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1986) and Draft Policies: The Next Decade and Beyond (The University of Alberta, 1987) - contain proposals for the future development of the university which would have significant implications for the library. For example, a key recommendation that greater emphasis be placed on graduate level study (University of Alberta, 1986: 18-19) would necessitate significant expansion of the colection in the required areas as well as service enhancements.

3. Academic Library Evaluation

a. Standards and Statistics

In conducting an academic library review, one process is to compare the library's operation to a set of standards developed by the profession. Two such sets of standards currently exist for academic libraries: the standards for university libraries (Association of College and Research Libraries, Joint ARL-ACRL Committee on University Library Standards, 1979), and the standards for college libraries (Association of College and Research Libraries, College Library Standards Committee, 1986).

The university library standards are of interest for the self-study. They are essentially qualitative and hence compatible with the philosophical approach of the PACCR process. The standards deal with the following aspects of operation: services, collections, personnel, facilities, administration and governance, and finance. They do not, as do the college standards, specify quantitative outputs for specific operations or services that a library should attempt to meet, an approach which appears

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to have been rejected by the university library community. The consensus seems to be that the complexity of university libraries and the variety in parent institution needs would result in quantitative standards being meaningless at best, and detrimental at worst, particularly for the larger institutions that exceed them (Lynch, 1982: 40-45). The current standards have remained essentially qualitative. This is established in the introduction to the standards, which states that they "are not intended to establish normative prescriptions for uniform application. Rather, they are intended to provide a general framework within which informed judgment can be applied to individual circumstances" (Association of College and Research Libraries, Joint Committee on University Library Standards, 1979: 101). Lynch also suggests (p. 46) that the standards be seen not as an actual instrument of evaluation, as quantitative standards might be, but as a framework or outline for evaluation. It is also of interest that the first standard deals not with collections, as did previous standards, but with services, a reflection for Lynch (p. 39) of the growing interest in the service aspect of university library operations.

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It should be noted, however, that there are ongoing concerns with the whole notion of standards, including those of a qualitative nature, as indicators of a library's effectiveness. Du Mont and Du Mont (1979) and Bloss (1981) both raise questions about the validity of standards. Bloss (pp. 287-293) argues that standards are not grounded on research into effectiveness but rather on "well-informed judgments of leaders of the profession," or "on the achievements of certain high-grade institutions." The problem does not necessarily lie with the

standards and numerical measurements as such but with the fact that what they attempt to measure does not necessarily represent true effectiveness. Concerns have also been raised about the accuracy of current measurement techniques and the lack of statistical comparability among institutions (e.g. Bloss, 1981; Prospero and Altman, 1972). This concern is well-recognized, and the use of more sophisticated measurement techniques is now being advocated (Cronin, 1985).

The university standards focus on qualitative analysis, but they do not avoid quantities altogether. Principle B., for example, notes that while there is no generally applicable formula yet developed to measure adequate collection size and growth, quantitative measures are increasingly important

> in guiding the qualitative judgment that must ultimately be applied to university libraries and their collections. One technique is the use of regression analysis to facilitate the comparison of libraries to one another; another of some general applicability is the "index of quality" developed by the American Council on Education for relating library collection size to graduate program quality. (Association of College and Research Libraries. Joint ARL-ACRL Committee on University Library Standards, 1979: 103).

Comparison of similar libraries to one another, as noted in the excerpt above, rather than to a set of standards, is a form of quantitative analysis of a library that has achieved some acceptance. This process is aided by the annual publication entitled University Library Statistics (Association of Research Libraries, 1974/75-). This publication provides detailed figures on the size of its member libraries in terms of holdings, expenditures, and personnel, and on their interlibrary loan activity, and describes the main statistical operations that ARL uses to make comparisons. It should be

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noted that the standards themselves include an appendix entitled, "Quantitative Analytical Techniques for University Libraries," which describes how ratio and regression analysis can be applied to the ARL statistics by libraries wishing to go beyond insights gained from a basic inspection of the data.

Although it does not refer to standards directly, the public services self-study process of the Association of Research Libraries echoes the problem of applying standards to public service. It notes that the success of public service transactions is often highly subjective and can be determined only roughly, often in terms of whether or not a particular user feels satisfied. It suggests, therefore, that such measures as level of use, frequency of use, and time expended on a public service task provide only raw data which must be interpreted with caution (Association of Research Libraries, Office of Management Studies, 1985: pp. 5-4 - 5-5).

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b. Effectiveness

Given the concerns about standards and measurement noted above, there is growing interest in the literature in what does constitute true effectiveness. Ward (1982), Brockman (1984), Bloss (1981), Abraham (1980), and Marchant (1980), all explore this concern. One of the earliest noteworthy studies to explore it was Hersfield and Boone (1972). While no longer recent, this study continues to be cited in the current literature as its approach was sophisticated for its time and continues to be relevant. Taylor (1972: 32), one of the contributors, advised that current measures of effectiveness were too static and should be replaced by more

dynamic measures such as the time frame in which a service is offered, ratios (e.g. the number of questions answered per staff member), and the interaction of system and user. User needs as an element of library effectiveness were examined further in the same article (p. 38) when the author suggested that the ways in which users negotiate questions in terms of library resources or develop their skills in self-use of the library should be incorporated into the process of assessing a library's effectiveness. Prospero and Altman (1972: 25) raised questions in the same volume about the accuracy, consistency, and comparability across institutions of the statistics being gathered by libraries, a problem that continues to cause concern.

c. Systems Analysis

Use of a systems model to assist in describing the complex interaction of internal operations with user services in a university library is not new. Taylor (1972), Lynch (1974), and Marchant (1980) have all advocated its use. A detailed study of a systems analysis applied to a library is found in the work of Du Mont and Du Mont (1979, 1980, 1981) which they incorporated into a comprehensive approach developed for assessing library effectiveness. In their 1979 study, they suggested several possible indicators of a library's effectiveness: 1.) the degree to which goals and objectives are achieved; 2.) quantitative inputs, such as materials, staff, and buildings - suggesting that service is effective in direct proportion to these resources; 3.) effective use of staff resources; 4.) interaction with users; and 5.) service to society as a whole (Du Mont and Du Mont, 1979: 127-129). The authors take

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their analysis a step further by adding a time dimension (p. 131), resulting in what they call a contingency model of library effectiveness where inputs, processes, and outputs vary over the present, near future, and distant future. In summary, their view is that effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which library transactions correspond to expectations over time (Du Mont and Du Mont, 1979: 132-133).

The environment, a key feature of systems analysis, has been highlighted by certain authors as a significant element in library evaluation generally. Williams (1983) pays considerable attention to the institutional environment's impact on the review process, noting that an academic library which is undertaking a self-study must recognize the political realities of the parent institution by relating the self-study to other institutional planning processes taking place at the same time. Also, the academic library self-study manual developed by the Council on Library Resources devotes two chapters directly to environment-related concerns (Council on Library Resources, 1977: 5-1 - 6-10).

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d. Academic Library Review Processes

Several review processes have been established to assist academic libraries in conducting self-studies of their operations. An important group of such processes has been developed by the Office of Management Studies of the Association of Research Libraries. The Collection Analysis Project (Gardiner, 1980) covers such procedures as: developing goals, objectives, and conceptual models; reviewing historical developments, environmental pressures, and philosophy as they influence collection development; reviewing operating practices

such as material funds allocation, resource sharing, and preservation; and examining issues and developing recommendations for the final report. Public Services in Research Libraries: an Assisted Self-Study Manual (Association of Research Libraries, Office of Management Studies, 1985), referred to briefly above in the section on standards and statistics, covers such topics as: library environment; service needs and performance; organization, management, and staffing of public services; technology and facilities; and articulating an overall plan and action planning.

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CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRAMEWORK

A. APPLICATION OF DATA FROM THE LITERATURE

PACCR establishes an overall philosophical approach, the topics to be examined, the role of two operational components, measurement and evaluation, and the primary objective, program improvement. These guidelines form a base on which to build a draft framework but they also raise several issues regarding how the framework would apply them in practice. PACCR de-emphasizes the measurement of quantitative data but the library, for various reasons, collects a large amount of such data - e.g. number of questions answered, number of items circulated, collection size, annual acquisitions. In order to adequately describe its operation, the library may need to make more use of this type of data than would a standard academic department. It should, however, keep in mind the spirit of the PACCR inquiry and use these figures as a tool for getting at the larger issues.

The role of evaluation also raises questions. PACCR assigns limited importance to evaluation procedures, feeling that they, like measurement, may lead the review away from the larger issues into procedural technicalities. However, given the size of the library and the complex interrelationships of its operations, some degree of structure would appear to be necessary. While some evaluation procedures may be overly structured, there may be others that would help to establish

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a degree of structure that is flexible enough to meet PACCR needs. Evaluation procedures that appear to have such potential are the naturalistic approach, systems analysis, and discrepancy analysis. Their application to the framework will be examined in more detail in the following section.

The requirement that the self-study make specific recommendations for program improvement is also of concern. The size and diversity of the library system, and the corresponding variety of opinions among staff as to how it would best operate, may make it difficult for the self-study to achieve a consensus on what needs to be improved and how it should be accomplished. Such a consensus might emerge more clearly at a later stage in the review process when there is more external input from knowledgable individuals outside the library, such as during the URC review. If this is the case, it may be desirable to defer making specific recommendations until that time. Yet, as PACCR asks the self-study to make such recommendations, it is felt that the framework should include a process that at least begins the exploration of potentially controversial issues and the development of a consensus for future action.

The likelihood that a larger number of units will wish to have input into the library's self-study than normally is the case in an academic department review needs to be recognized by the framework. Procedures that are able to incorporate such input and identify the library's unique role in the university should therefore be considered; special procedures not normally used in a self-study but which are considered to be effective in this regard would be within the overall PACCR guidelines.

The naturalistic approach would be appropriate as an underlying feature of the framework. It would encourage the use of

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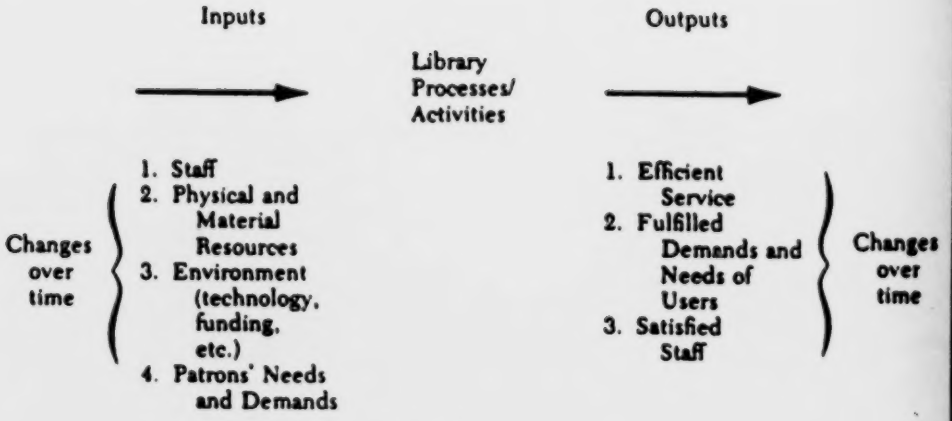

Figure 3.

A Basic Systems Model of an Academic Library

procedures designed to gather a range of ideas, perspectives and values regarding library operations, use varied sources of data and methods of collection, and develop a flexible structure. Among the data gathering procedures suited to this approach are interviews, observation, and document analysis.

The framework should incorporate a process for identifying the various functions and services of the system, how they interact with one another across the system, and terms and categories for these operations that are as consistent as possible across the system so that the data can be compared. This process should also be able to examine the impact of the environment on library functions and services. There are several different environments that may affect the library: the immediate environment of the parent institution; the larger socio-economic environment in which the institution operates; and the library's own professional environment, which consists of other libraries, networks of various kinds, publishers and distributors of information and materials, professional associations, and other such organizations. Socio-economic factors such as technological change and government policy will also have a significant effect on the library and should therefore be considered as part of the environment.

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In order to show how the various components of the library interact with one another and are influenced by the environment an open systems model is proposed. A basic systems model, applied to a library by Du Mont and Du Mont (1979: 106), is illustrated in Figure 3. From it they develop a contingency model with a time dimension (not illustrated here). In the opinion of the author, the contingency model is more complicated than required for purposes of the self-study. It is recommended

instead that Kells' open systems model for a department within a post-secondary institution (Figure 2.) be adapted to the library and included in the framework. Figures 5. and 6. of Chapter IV illustrate specific application of Kells' model to the library generally and to a particular function, public service. Variations of the model for other functions or services can be developed as required.

In recognzing the environment, the framework should also point out the need for procedures to incorporate data from other university planning processes taking place at the same time as the review. As noted in Chapter II, one such process is now underway at the university, and is represented by two Board of Governors' reports, The Next Decade and Beyond: a Plan for the Future (University of Alberta, 1986) and Draft Policies: the Next Decade and Beyond (University of Alberta, 1987). The framework should enable the self-study to address issues raised by these processes that affect the library, and generate further information of use in the larger process. This would be valid for the review itself and also for drawing attention to the significant role played by the library in the overall academic enterprise.

The framework should suggest the use of major themes of significance to the library as a method of cutting across divisional boundaries and integrating the self-study on a system-wide basis. This would continue the process begun during the Fall 1986 retreat in which themes of significance to the entire system - e.g. technology, staffing, funding, services, bibliographic control - were discussed and position papers written.

Examination of the library's operation in relation to the university library standards of the Association of College and

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Research Libraries should be a part of the framework, as well as a comparison of the library's statistics to those of other academic libraries, using the annual statistics of the Association of Research Libraries. Again, any comparison should aim to get at the larger issues rather than dwell on the figures themselves. PACCR would likely prefer a general comparsion rather than one that involves formal statistical analysis.

Although a formal discrepancy analysis would not likely be appropriate for a PACCR review, some comparison of desired and actual outcomes should be considered as a method for identifying the library's strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Given that PACCR asks the unit to develop objectives as part of the self-study, the library will have at least some of the necessary data available should it wish to conduct such an analysis.

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The framework should also stress the importance of effective communication procedures so that those directly involved in the self-study as well as library staff generally have information they require when needed in an appropriate format. Key points should be identified where special communications, such as an interim report, would be useful.

Some reference to the issue of library effectiveness would be appropriate in the framework. It was noted earlier that an important indicator of effectiveness are user perceptions of the value of a library and the quality of library service. Such perceptions are often of a subjective and qualitative nature, and appropriate instruments, such as open-ended questionnaires, interviews, or observation, should be considered. A case study might also be useful, although time-consuming, for looking in depth at a particular user service - e.g. bibliographic instruc-

tion. It would be unwise, however, to base an assessment of effectiveness entirely on user perceptions. Users who lack sophistication in library use may give an overly high rating that does not reflect what should actually be expected. Given that potentially inaccurate data may be collected, data analysis procedures such as triangulation, in which similar data are obtained from different sources, should be considered as a way of verifying the validity of user perceptions and other data. For example, questions dealing with user expectations could also be asked of library staff or explored in the literature in order to compare user expectations to what can actually or potentially be provided. Also, the implications of user expectations for funding, staffing, and related matters would need to be considered.

Some reference to the self-study processes developed by the Association of Research Libraries Office of Management Studies would be appropriate. However, their potential application should be kept fairly general, for example to help identify themes or processes of potential interest. The PACCR process is the key the structure for the library's review, and any application of the ARL/OMS topics or procedures should be adapted to it and carried out within its guidelines.

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B. DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT FRAMEWORK AND MATRIX

These considerations from the literature were synthesized into a preliminary framework for the self-study (Appendix B), and resulted in it having a number of distinct characteristics which reflect the most important of them. A balance of quantitative and qualitative data is achieved by the use of varied operational and service statistics as well as user opinion, a

more subjective measure, within the overall context of a naturalistic approach. Use of evaluation procedures is limited to establishing a basic working structure for the self-study using a matrix and an open systems model in order to aid, not inhibit, the exploration of larger issues. The matrix, a key element of the draft framework, proposes a method for identifying the full range of possible topics to be addressed by the review: the functions and services of the library, the administrative units that perform them, and the PACCR topics such as history, current status, and areas for improvement. It raises the question of whether functions or areas should be emphasized. The matrix also provides a starting point for analyzing how the different functions interact with one another among the different units that perform them across the system. The systems model is proposed as a supplement to the matrix to help structure the exploration of how the different components of the system, as identified by the matrix, interact with and influence one another.

The process of determining how other planning processes at the university may affect the future development of the library is incorporated into various parts of the framework; for example, the data gathering phase indicates the need to to interview university personnel in this regard.

C. THE VIEWS OF LIBRARY STAFF

1. Discussions With the Chief Librarian and Staff Advisor of the Project

These discussions dealt mostly with how the project should be conducted in order to involve staff effectively. As noted earlier, the Chief Librarian recommended that the project not become too detailed or it might be seen by

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staff as threatening and fail to secure their participation. This advice was followed. Interview questions were reasonably broad, yet allowed staff to be more specific if they chose. Given that the purpose of the project was to develop a framework for the self-study rather than detailed procedures, this approach was felt to be appropropriate.

2. Interviews With Library Staff

During the months of June to November, 1987, as outlined in Chapter I.C., the first draft of the framework (Appendix B.) was circulated to each area co-ordinator and division head of the system to obtain their feedback and suggestions for change. The data gathered during these interviews were grouped under the following headings:

- -overall reaction to the framework
- -goals and objectives of the self-study
- -review by area versus review by function
- -library function priorities for the self-study
- -PACCR priorities for the self-study
- -concerns of staff regarding the self-study
- -task groups
- -library effectiveness as an issue of the self-study
- -the Faculty of Education strategic planning process.

The main findings for each of these topics are outlined in the following section. It is of interest that in a number of cases the interview data confirmed specific findings from the literature.

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a. Overall Reaction to the Framework

All of the staff interviewed felt that the framework represented an acceptable and useful approach to conducting the self-study. An initial suggestion for change was to reduce the number of cells making up the matrix by combining some of the variables - e.g. combining reference, bibliographic instruction, and access into one heading, public services.

b. Goals and Objectives of the Self-Study

The responses to this question showed that there were a number of library-specific objectives that interviewees felt should be included to supplement the general objectives of PACCR. There did not appear to be a consensus at this point that any one of these objectives was more important the others. They are as follows:

- to examine the role of the library in the academic enterprise of the university; to explore new roles for the library in that enterprise that are in keeping with the university's evolution and which establish effective interaction with related university operations (e.g. Computing Systems);

- to develop cost-effective management strategies that aim to preserve essential services, develop new services despite reduced resources, and develop new operational priorities that recognize the importance of the new technologies;

- to develop strategies for competing effectively for the university's resources;

- to develop specific action plans for the next three to five years that are designed to achieve concrete changes in areas where it is determined that improvement is required;

- to focus on the user's perspective of the strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement of library services;

- to develop among staff a sense of the system as a whole and its interrelationships in order to

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help overcome divisions and achieve greater system-wide efficiency;

-to develop an overall mission and sense of direction for the library that is consistent with the mission of the university.

c. Review of Areas Versus Review of Functions

This was a key question of the interviews, and elicited a number of pros and cons for each approach. Interviewees who supported separate self-studies felt they might be easier to carry out, less of a burden on staff, and better able to represent the specific concerns of a particular unit. At the same time, however, a number of these interviewees felt that separate self-studies might lead to duplication of effort and be difficult to pull together into the single report required by PACCR. In addition to this, there was clearly a consensus that although a review of functions across the system would probably be more difficult, it would likely be more effective in the long run in generating data that would improve the system as a whole. It was also felt that such an approach would be useful in establishing a full cost to the system of a particular function or service, a consideration which several interviewees indicated should be addressed by the review.

d. Self-Study Priorities: PACCR Topics

Of the seven topics which PACCR asks the unit to examine, as noted in Chapter II, the following were considered to be the most important: impending changes, strengths, weaknesses, and areas/strategies for improvement. This reflects the feeling of those interviewed that the review must succeed in developing concrete plans that will be implemented to resolve identified concerns and meet future challenges.

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e. Self-Study Priorities: Library Functions and Services

The consensus was that if specific functions or services were identified as priorities before commencing, the self-study might be viewed as less than objective and subject to hidden agendas. Interviewees felt that any function or service which did require more attention should become apparent during the course of the review.

f. Concerns of Staff Regarding the Self-Study

The primary concern, one which was noted by virtually all interviewees, was that the self-study not be too introspective; many used the the term "navel-gazing" to describe what it should not be. It was felt that this pitfall could be avoided if there were clear indication that the review would be expected to develop concrete plans for the future and that the time, resources, and authority necessary to achieve this would be made available. All interviewees felt that the process should be as efficient as possible given the scope of the undertaking. However, they also indicated that the extra time required would be justified if it meant that the necessary plans would be developed and acted upon. To make the process as efficient as possible, it was recommended that data from previous studies be incorporated into the self-study. There was concern, however, that such data may no longer be relevant. As a rule of thumb, it was suggested that the review use only those studies conducted after the current Chief Librarian assumed his position in 1982. In particular, it was considered essential to incorporate the various reports and position papers from the Fall 1986 retreat.

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g. Degree of Staff Involvement

There was a clear consensus that all levels and types of library staff should be involved in the study, either directly or through some form of representation, in order to bring together different types of expertise and develop a full picture of library functions and services. It was felt, however, that the large number of staff necessitated an efficient process for such input. It was suggested that the use of representatives or committee input be considered as an alternative to direct consultation on an individual basis due to possible time constraints.

h. Task Groups

Interviewees felt that task groups would likely be the most useful vehicle for conducting the self-study. In terms of their structure and mandate, interviewees recommended the following: small size, from three to five members; clear, well-defined tasks with sufficient authority to carry them out and draw on the expertise of system staff; and, a mix of staff in order to bring together different kinds of expertise and stimulate creativity in exploring alternatives and making recommendations. Interviewees also felt that the study needed an overall co-ordinating group with sufficient authority and responsibility to direct and co-ordinate the full process. Task groups should also make effective use of existing committees of the library for gathering data and communicating among one another and library staff during the study.

i. Library Effectiveness as an Issue for the Self-Study

Most interviewees felt that library effectiveness was

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an interesting and important consideration for the library. However, they also felt that an investigation of effectiveness might be somewhat outside the scope of the self-study as defined by PACCR. Also, interviewees felt that any study of library effectiveness would be a complex process requiring more time and in-depth analysis than PACCR offered. On the other hand, a number interviewees also felt that the issue might arise of its own accord due to its close connection with the concept of user needs, as it had to some extent during the Fall 1986 retreat. Since a clear consensus did not emerge with respect to the issue of effectiveness, the author felt it would be appropriate to leave it in the framework as a possible area of interest to explore if staff so chose. Since PACCR asks the unit to identify its objectives, doing so could be considered part of the process of determining effectiveness criteria, since a library's objectives are usually considered to represent its best understanding of user needs.

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j. Faculty of Education Strategic Planning Process

The Faculty of Education is in the midst of a major faculty-wide planning process designed to build on its departmentally-oriented PACCR reviews. A key feature of the process are the comprehensive procedures for obtaining a wide range of opinion from stakeholders in the community. There is interest in how such a process might be applied to the library's PACCR review, and the author was asked by the Chief Librarian to obtain the reactions of staff to its potential application to the library's review. Interviewees generally felt that this approach would be a significant departure from the standard PACCR process and change the overall approach to the self-study. The question

of whether it might be appropriate after a standard self-study had been conducted was not discussed. In general, interviewees felt they needed more information about what the process consisted of before they could give their opinion.

B.1. Modification of the Framework

As a result of staff reaction to the framework, a number changes were made. The number of matrix cells was reduced by combining topics. Additional goals for the self-study that were identified as being significant for the library were included. Review of functions and services across the system was emphasized over review of divisions, although provision was retained for areas and divisions to indicate their own concerns as part of the data gathering process. Procedures were included for dealing with those aspects of the review which interviewees felt were most important (i.e. strengths, limitations/weaknesses, areas for improvement, impending changes) and for consolidating the findings in the final report. Recognizing the need for efficiency, the framework recommends the use of data from previous studies still considered to be valid. The framework recognizes the need to ensure that the self-study is not merely introspective. It develops specific phases that lead through to the development of concrete recommendations, in particular the consolidation phase designed to resolve potential inconsistencies or conflicts respecting the findings of the self-study. The need to clearly define task group composition and activies, and to develop procedures to ensure broad staff input and good communications is indicated. Determining criteria for library effectiveness is treated as a possible area of interest rather than a specific expectation of the self-study.

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CHAPTER IV

THE FRAMEWORK

1. INTRODUCTION AND PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

1.1. The following document describes a proposed framework for the self-study portion of the library system's upcoming PACCR review and constitutes the recommendations of the project as developed from findings of previous chapters. The framework was developed with the approval of library administration, but the library is not bound to follow its recommendations. This chapter uses a special numbering format not found in previous chapters. The format does not suggest that the self-study should take place in a highly-structured sequence, as it is recognized that the study should take place in a manner that makes the best use of library resources and staff creativity. Thus, the numbering sequence is designed to do three things: suggest a general sequence of activities, highlight important concepts or activities, and facilitate reference to specific sections of the framework-while the study is being conducted. This chapter may be distributed independently of the rest of the report; however, the information pertaining to the framework's development (Chapter III) would also be useful as it gives more information on why the various elements of the framework were recommended.

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1.2. Reasons for the PACCR Review

The University requires that each academic department, service unit, or administrative unit review its operations in order to generate information about ways it could improve, and to provide the university with information that will be useful in planning for the future.

1.3. Philosophical Approach to the Review Process

1.3.1. PACCR'S philosophical approach involves two operational components: measurement and evaluation, and a primary objective, program improvement. Measurement of indicators that the unit feels are relevant is necessary, but for PACCR it is of minor importance. Evaluation, which PACCR views as informed judgment, is more important but still not the key. The primary objective is program improvement designed to catalyze constructive change and adaptation to the demands of the future, to ensure that the public interest in the university is being served as effectively as possible.

1.3.2. Although measurement is a low priority for PACCR, it is suggested that since the library collects a wide range of statistics, it use them to help develop a full des-

cription of functions and services and to explore issues; it should not allow them to dominate; instead, it should use them as a tool for examining the larger issues.

1.3.3. Although evaluation is also a low priority for PACCR, it is suggested that three kinds of evaluation activities be considered for the self-study: an informal discrepancy analysis in which objectives are compared to actual outcomes; a systems analysis to co-ordinate data gathering and analysis and to help identify the interrelationships of different operations and the impact of the environment on them; and a naturalistic review process that is flexible, evolving, and uses varied sources of data and methods of data collection.

1.3.4. The review should adopt a balance between quantitative and qualitative processes in which analysis of specific data leads to an examination of the larger issues facing the library and an understanding of needs and values relating to library service.

1.4. Goals of the Self-Study

PACCR establishes three main goals for the self-study:

i. to provide PACCR and the Unit Review Committee (part of the external review process that follows the self-study, hereafter referred to as the URC) with a description of the history and current status of the library, the impending changes facing it, its objectives, strengths, limitations or weaknesses, and areas for improvement with suggested strategies for change; the URC will incorporate this information into its own review;

ii. to provide the university with information about the library that will be useful in planning for the future;

iii. to assist the library in gaining a greater awareness of itself, where it is heading, and how it might improve its programs and services in light of new demands and future challenges.

In addition to these three goals established by PACCR for all reviews, a number of other goals of specific interest to the library have been proposed by staff who were interviewed. They are listed in Section 3.2.2 of the framework.

1.5 Research Methodology

1.5.1. The research methodology proposed by the framework is based on a mix of quantitative and qualitative processes with the emphasis on qualitative examination of the larger issues; the main characteristics of a naturalistic or qualitative approach are as follows: use of the natural setting - i.e. the library itself - as the

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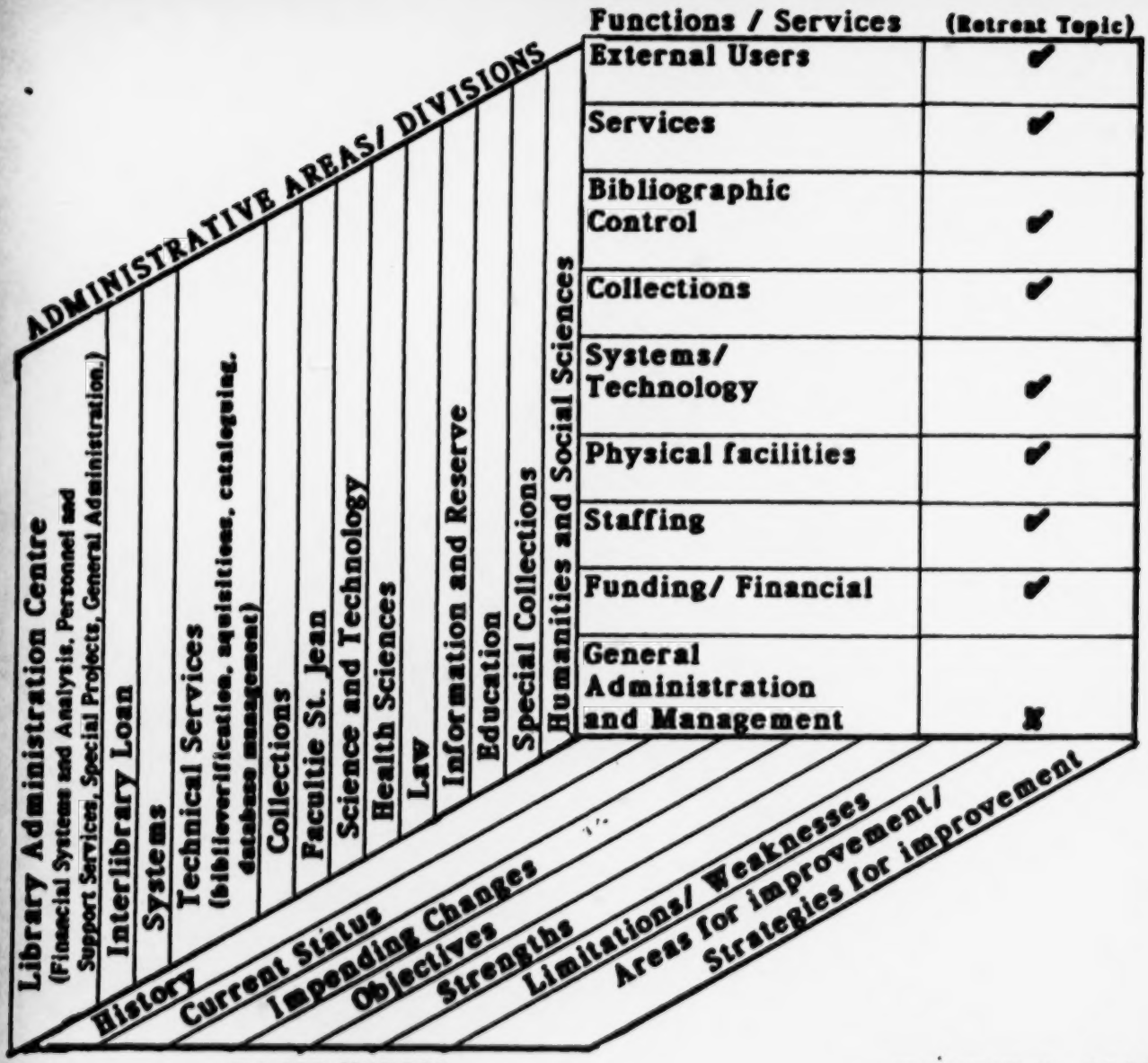

FIGURE 4. MATRIX

source of the data rather than a controlled environment; rich description, using a variety of different data; concern with process as well as product or outcome when studying the activities of the library; inductive analysis of data; and emphasis on the meaning and value of library activities as perceived by the various groups or individuals that have an interest in them.

1.6 The qualitative methods of the PACCR process should also be useful in exploring potential new indicators of effectiveness which go beyond traditional quantitative indicators such as collection size, number of questions answered, number of items circulated. The aim of this aspect of the review would be to explore the use of new criteria for assessing effectiveness that may be more relevant to the changing needs of users in the information age. If such criteria can be developed during the the review, the library could use them in its ongoing management and planning activities. However, to explore this issue properly, a more in-depth research process than PACCR would likely be required as well as considerably more staff time. Therefore, while not treating effectiveness assessment as a priority, the framework recommends that if it does emerge, it be given the attention considered appropriate by the steering group or task group concerned.

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2. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK

2.1. REVIEW OF FUNCTIONS

The framework recommends that rather than study areas or divisions of the library system and them consolidate the findings into a single report, the self-study should instead examine the library's functions and services across the system. This should lead to a better understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement of the system as a whole. Consolidating this system-wide information in the final report should be easier than consolidating the information from separate area or division reports. Individual areas or divisions will be able to provide data relevant to their own needs and concerns, but the framework is designed to emphasize the concerns of the system as a whole, and to develop a system-wide perspective of each function or service studied.

2.2. MATRIX (Figure 4.)

2.2.1 The matrix is a three-dimensional representation of the range of possible topics that could be covered by the self-study:

i. the functions and services performed by the system as identified at the November 1987 library retreat;

ii. the PACCR variables (history, current status,

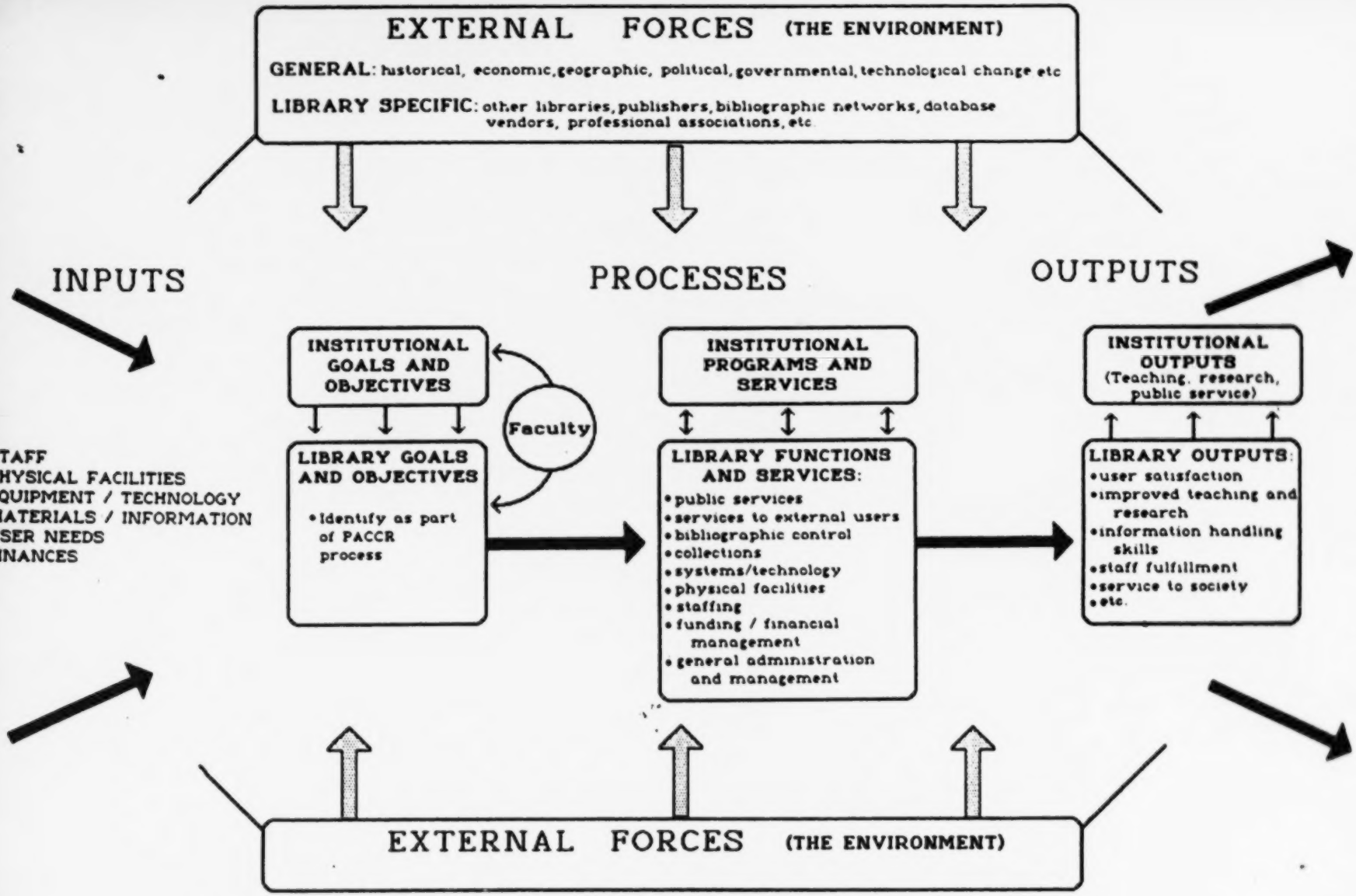

FIGURE 5. **Open systems model of a University Library within its parent institution**

impending changes, objectives, strengths, limitations or weaknesses, and areas for improvement with appropriate strategies for change);

iii. the administrative units that make up the system, consisting of areas which have direct contact with users and provide specific services to them (e.g. area libraries, special collections), or divisions which do not normally provide services directly to users but which provide some form of support to the library as a whole (e.g. systems, personnel, administration, technical services).

The matrix is designed primarily to help identify the range of possible topics that could be studied in the review. It may also help to show their relationship to one another. Each imaginary box of the matrix has three components: function or service, administrative unit, and PACCR review topic. Since each side of the matrix lists the elements of the variable that have been identified as relevant to the self-study, the matrix acts as a checklist of the range of possible topics that could be covered by the self-study.

2.2.2 It will be necessary to identify each area or division of the system in which a particular function or service (or part thereof) is performed in order to determine the full extent of the operation.

2.2.3. It was noted in Section 2.1. above that the framework emphasizes a functional rather than and area/division approach. The two key variables of the matrix, therefore, are those on the front panel - the functions and services identified at the Fall 1986 retreat - and those on the bottom panel - the PACCR variables (history, current status, etc.). The third variable - areas and divisions - has been retained in order to ensure that where there are relevant data pertaining to an area or division, they can be obtained.

2.3. SYSTEMS MODEL

To assist the various participants in the self-study in adopting a co-ordinated approach, it is proposed that each task group (Section 2.4.) use an open systems model that has been adapted to a university library setting and which shows the relationship of the library to its parent institution. Such a model is illustrated in Figure 5. Task groups can adapt it to fit the particular function or service they are studying, as illustrated by Figure 6., which shows how it is adapted to the public service function. It is hoped that use of the model would help to clarify the interrelationships among differrent functions across the system and the impact of the external environment on them. Use of the model should also help to generate data/findings

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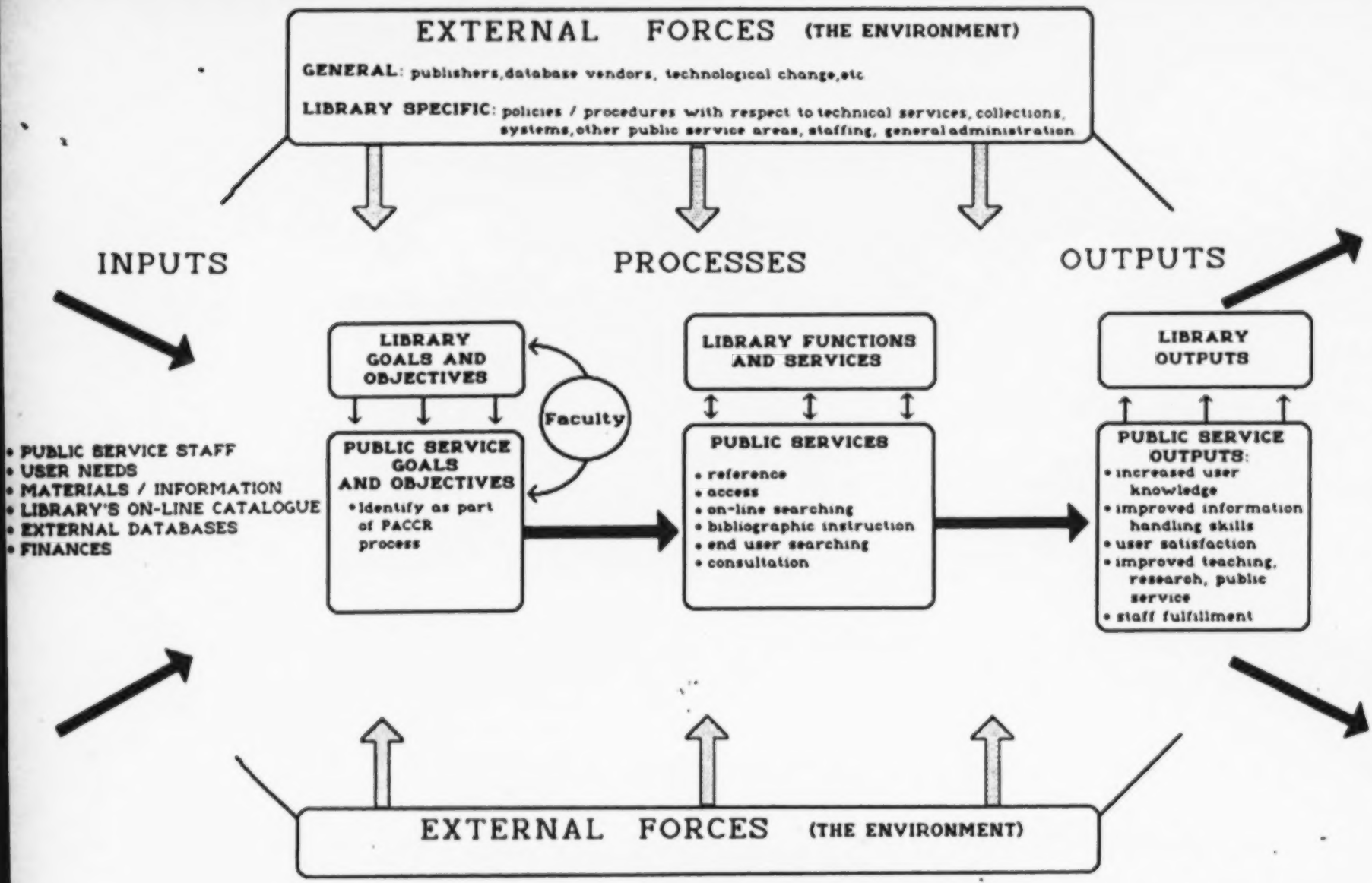

FIGURE 6. Open Systems model of the public service function within a University library

which are comparable across the system and more readily synthesized for the final report.

As noted in Chapter III, the systems model should be viewed as a supplement to the matrix, a tool to help show how the various components of the system, as identified by the matrix, are interrelated.

2.4. TASK GROUP STRUCTURE

2.4.1. Co-ordinating or Steering Group

For overall co-ordination of the self-study, a group with the following characteristics is proposed:

- -small, from 3 to 5 members, with one member designated as group leader
- -responsible, in consultation with the Chief Librarian, for co-ordinating and directing the self-study; this would involve such tasks as:
  - -designing general procedures for describing the history, current status, impending changes, objectives, strengths, weaknesses or limitations, areas for improvement, and strategies for such improvement;
  - -establishing task group membership and asssigning tasks to the appropriate groups;
  - -monitoring progress of task groups and keeping the overall self-study on track;
  - -communicating with Chief Librarian and library staff on the study's progress and resolving problems that arise
  - -consolidating the findings and recommendations of the task group reports;
  - -writing the final report;
- -sufficient authority to effectively co-ordinate and direct all aspects of the self-study.

2.4.2. Individual Task Groups

For reviewing individual functions and services, task groups with the following characteristics are proposed:

- -small, 3 to 5 members, with one member designated as group leader
- -responsible for identifying topics from the matrix that relate to the particular function or service that the task group has been assigned to review,

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reviewing them, making recommendations, and writing a report of its findings

-composed of individuals who have the necessary skills and knowledge, who can work together effectively, and who have a variety of perspectives on how the function is being performed across the system and how it could be improved;

-have sufficient authority to gather the necessary data and make recommendations

-use procedures that enable them to study their particular function or service at the system level; this can be accomplished through the composition of the task groups, through consultation with an appropriate range of staff from the system who either perform some aspect the function or are affected by it, through use of the matrix and systems model, etc.

3. PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING THE SELF-STUDY

3.1. The procedures for conducting the self-study outlined in this section are organized into six phases of a project management process. They are designed to guide the library through the entire process, from initial setting of goals and objectives to final reporting:

i. developing the goals and objectives of the self-study

ii. designing the self-study

iii. getting the self-study underway

iv. gathering and analyzing data, identifying issues, exploring alternatives, and making recommendations

v. consolidating the findings and recommendations

vi. reporting.

It may seem redundant to include phases i. and ii. since they have already been carried out in the course of developing the framework. However, it is the author's feeling that since the framework is only one of a number of possible approaches, the library may wish to go through these two phases itself, at least to some degree, to either confirm that it is satisfied with the proposed approach or to develop something it feels is more appropriate; for this reason, the full process is provided.

These phases would be carried out during the self-

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study as described in Sections 3.2. to 3.8.2. that follow.

3.2. PHASE ONE: DEVELOPING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SELF-STUDY

3.2.1 The purpose of this phase is to clarify what the library wishes to accomplish in the self-study. It is important that the library establish these goals and objectives clearly before beginning to design the study to ensure that the study will be able to achieve its objectives.

In developing objectives for the review, the library should start with the seven main objectives established by PACCR:

i. Describe the history of the library.

ii. Describe the current status of the library.

iii. Identify and describe the impending changes which the library will likely have to face in the future.

iv. Identify the objectives of the library.

v. Identify and describe the strengths of the library.

vi. Identify and describe the limitations or weaknesses of the library.

vii. Identify and describe areas for improvement in the library's functions or services, and strategies for carrying out such improvements.

3.2.2. In addition to the PACCR objectives listed above, a number of more specific objectives of particular relevance to the library were suggested by library staff during the course of developing the framework. They are as follows (no particular order):

- to examine the role of the library in the academic enterprise of the university; explore new roles for the library in that enterprise that are in keeping with the university's evolution and which establish effective interaction with related university operations (e.g. Computing Systems);

- to develop cost-effective management strategies that aim to preserve essential services, develop new services despite reduced resources, and develop new operational priorities that recognize the importance of the new technologies;

- to develop strategies for competing effectively for the university's resources;

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-to develop specific action plans for the next three to five years that are designed to achieve concrete changes in areas where it is determined that improvement is required;

-to focus on the user's perspective of the strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement of library services;

-to develop among staff a sense of the system as a whole and its interrelationships in order to help overcome divisions and achieve greater system-wide efficiency;

-to develop an overall mission and sense of direction for the library that is consistent with the mission of the university.

3.2.3. Major recommendations arising out of these objectives would not likely be acted upon until they have been taken through the full review process. However, proposed changes of a smaller scale might be considered for earlier implementation at the discretion of the Chief Librarian in consultation with the appropriate parties.

3.3. PHASE TWO: DESIGNING THE SELF STUDY

3.3.1 The purpose of this phase is to design the actual procedures for carrying out the self-study. The objectives developed in 3.2. above should serve as the basis of the design. The co-ordinating group would be responsible for developing the overall design, in consultation with the Chief Librarian and the Area Co-ordinators Committee. The design would establish general procedures for:

-gathering/analyzing data, identifying issues from the data, exploring alternatives to resolve the issues, and making recommendations from the alternatives, consolidating the findings of each task group, and producing the final report; individual task groups would use this general design as a basis for developing more specific procedures if they feel they would be more appropriate for the function or service they are studying;

The design should keep in mind that because the library is a service unit, it may need to use procedures for its self-study that meet specialized needs; for example, it may need to gather data from a larger than normal number of other units or individuals on campus due to the fact it is a service unit and interacts with a wide range of other campus activities; consultation with PACCR would be appropriate in this regard.

The design should also:

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-clarify the functions and services to be studied, using the matrix; add, delete, or combine functions on the matrix as the co-ordinating group feels is appropriate;

-establish the task groups - their membership, authority, and specific responsibilities;

-establish communications procedures: among task groups and the co-ordinating group for sharing relevant data, making progress reports, resolving problems, etc.; among task groups, co-ordinating group, and library staff generally for sharing information about the study's progress; key points should also be considered for producing some form of interim or progress report;

-establish time frames for the various activities of the self-study; this would involve estimating the amount of time each will require and clarifying the order in which they should occur so that activities which must be completed before others can begin are carried out in proper sequence; a proposed time frame is illustrated in Figure 7.

NOTE: PACCR makes only one recommendation with respect to timing: it suggests that the sections on history and current status be completed for the unit as a whole before individual study groups begin exploring other areas; this is intended to provide a common base of data for all groups to work with; the library may wish to consider this approach as part of the design

-consider procedures to ensure that data are valid - e.g. establish the number of users it should interview, obtain data from a variety of sources if possible, etc.;

-consider the possibility of hiring temporary staff for research assistance or data entry for production of the report;

-set up general guidelines for the timing and production of task group reports and the final report so that the process is efficient.

3.3.2 While all aspects of the study should be considered during the design phase, the procedures that are developed should not be considered as final - they may need to be revised during the study due to unforseen circumstances such as the emergence of new data, the needs of a particular task group, etc.; the design should be allowed to evolve during the self-study in accordance with needs as they emerge.

3.3.3. The co-ordinating group may wish to consult PACCR officials during the design for general guidance.

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3.3.4 The design should also be compatible with the organizational structure of the library. For example, it should consider making use of standing committees to assist in gathering data about a function or service.

3.3.5. The design should also explore ways of integrating the self-study with the university-wide planning process currently underway, represented by the The Next Decade and Beyond and related documents, so that data relevant to both processes can be shared where appropriate.

3.3.6. No functions or services should be identified as priorities before the study begins - any such priorities should instead emerge during the study. However, the PACCR variables that should be emphasized are impending changes, objectives, strengths, limitations/weaknesses, and areas/ strategies for improvement.

3.3.7. Involving library staff in designing the study will help to gain their support once it begins. Various forums can be used to circulate the proposed procedures for comment - Library Council, Area Co-ordinator meetings, etc. If no such meetings for support staff currently exist, a process should be developed to obtain their views.

3.3.8. In order to make the necessary time available to do a quality job of the self-study, it is suggested that library administration designate certain tasks as lower priority than normal for the duration of the review.

3.3.9. The Office of Management Studies (OMS) of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) has developed several self-study processes for academic libraries. It may be useful for the library to make a general comparison of its own procedures to those of these self-study processes. Of potential interest are:

- -the Academic Library Development Program: a Guided Self-Study for the Small and Medium-Sized Academic Library;
- -Public Services in Research Libraries: an Assisted Self-Study Manual;
- -Collection Analysis Project: An Assisted Self-Study Manual.

NOTE: These manuals are normally for use only by libraries that are participating in a self-study co-ordinated by ARL/OMS; since the library is not involved with ARL on a formal basis with respect to the PACCR review, the manuals should be used informally, with discretion.

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3.4 PHASE THREE: GETTING THE REVIEW UNDERWAY

3.4.1. The following kinds of activities would be appropriate for this purpose:

- -circulate written communication to all library staff informing them that the review is about to begin and to give a general overview of the process;
- -hold general information meetings with library staff using established meeting structures - e.g. Library Council, Management Advisory Council, etc., to review the objectives and design of the study;
- -hold meetings with those who will be involved in directing or carrying out a specific part of the of the study (e.g. task group leaders) to clarify the overall design of the review and their individual responsibilities;
- -invite PACCR personnel to these meetings in order to answer questions, clarify procedures, etc.;
- -clarify projected time frame and sequence of activities;
- -clarify communication, monitoring, and reporting procedures for those involved in the self-study;
- -clarify library tasks that can be put on a lower priority while the review is in progress in order to make the necessary time available;
- -establish task groups and assign initial tasks to appropriate groups, as specified by the design, with deadlines for completion; assign tasks to individuals if specified by the design.

3.5. PHASE FOUR: GATHER AND ANALYZE DATA, IDENTIFY ISSUES, EXPLORE ALTERNATIVES, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS

3.5.1. The purpose of this phase is three-fold:

i. to gather and analyze data that describe and/or identify the history, current status, impending changes, objectives, strengths, limitations or weaknesses, areas for improvement, and possible strategies for achieving these improvements with respect to each function or service identified on the front panel of the matrix;

ii. to identify issues from the data: concerns or problems that the library should try to resolve, or constraints that it cannot change but must accommodate; in this context, even the library's

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strengths may be considered as issues, since they may suggest following certain courses of action over others;

iii. to identify and discuss different strategies for dealing with these issues, and to make recommendations from among these alternatives that, in the opinion of the task group, will bring about the needed improvements and enable the library to deal successfully with the challenges of the future.

3.5.2. Each task group, in consultation with the co-ordinating group, can use the matrix to help identify topics it will study for its particular function or service. It should start by listing all possible topics. It can then group and priorize topics in order to arrive at a reasonable list. General procedures established by the co-ordinating group can be adapted by each task group as required. Topics and procedures should be confirmed with the co-ordinating group.

3.5.3. Rephrasing topics as questions can help to focus data gathering - e.g. What are strengths of the bibliographic instruction service of the library?

3.5.4. As part of the process of identifying topics to study, it is also suggested that the library examine what constitutes effectiveness in the academic library setting, as discussed in Section 1.6. above.

3.5.5. PACCR requests that some form of staff profile be included in the self-study. This can be done using curriculum vitae, which can be separated from the main report if the library does not wish them to be distributed. PACCR also expects that a certain amount of statistical information about library operating budget, staff, students (in the library's case, users generally) and funding be included.

3.5.6. The task group should identify all areas and divisions of the system where the function or service or part thereof which they are studying is carried out. This would be necessary in order to describe the function completely and to indicate how it interacts with other functions of the system. The systems model (Figures 5. and 6.) can be used to help identify how the different operations interact with one another.

3.5.7. The task group should then identify possible sources of data relevant to the function it is studying. Sources may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

-studies of functions or services previously conducted by the library or currently in process, whose information or findings are still considered to be valid (e.g. CAP, retreat position papers, technical services

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self-studies, etc.); NOTE: it is recommended that only those studies which were carried out after the current Chief Librarian was appointed be used as a data source, although previous studies may be used for the history portion of the study;

-studies carried out by university bodies other than the library which may be relevant - e.g. The Next Decade and Beyond: a Plan for the Future;

-library users: students (both on and off campus), faculty, special borrowers, members of the public, etc.;

-library staff from the different areas or divisions: librarians, library support staff, administrative and professional officers, programmers, etc.;

-personnel from other departments of the university who have an interest in the library but who may not be users as such: e.g. members of faculty library committees, Members of GFCLC, Deans/ Department Chairs, personnel from related departments or faculties such as University Computing Systems, the Registrar, Physical Plant, Archives, University Collections, Faculty of Extension; data maintained by such departments or faculties that may be relevant to the library - e.g. registration figures and patterns;

-documents generated by the library system or the university: historical or archival records; mission, goals, or objectives statements; policy and procedure documents; annual reports; committee minutes; reports of task forces, special projects, etc.; statistical records; suggestion box notes from users; non-confidential personnel documents; responses to questionnaires given out after public service programs (e.g. bibliographic instruction, end user searching, etc.);

-personnel or documents from external bodies that are involved in some way with the library system - e.g. bibliographic, resource sharing, or other networks; professional associations; etc.

-the literature on academic libraries and related topics;

-Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) university library standards and Association of Research Libraries (ARL) statistics for comparison purposes

-the community at large, for data about what the public and the broader educational/research community feel is the proper role of the

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library; it is also a source of expert opinion on trends and developments in society that may affect the library;

-other sources as may be appropriate.

3.5.8. As the self-study is primarily qualitative, statistical concerns such as sample size and confidence level will not apply. However, the library should consider how many individuals or other sources of data it will need to consult to obtain valid information.

3.5.9. The task group should identify data gathering instruments or procedures which already exist in the library system or in the literature, or which it could develop itself, for use in gathering data about the function or service it is studying. Potential instruments or procedures include the following:

-content analysis of previous studies conducted by the library or other bodies which are still relevant; this should include an assessment of the status of their recommendations - e.g. whether or not they were implemented, what improvements resulted, and whether other recommendations are still valid and applicable;

-interviews, using different types of questions - e.g. open-ended, semi-structured, structured - depending on the kinds of data that are required;

-questionnaires, again using different types of questions depending on the kind of data that is required;

-individual submissions by users or other stakeholders/interested parties;

-observation of library activities;

-content analysis of relevant policy and procedure documents;

-literature review.

3.5.10. Data gathering and analysis may be co-ordinated using the matrix, supplemented by an open systems model (Figures 4, 5, and 6).

3.5.11. Once the data have been gathered, they should be analyzed so as to facilitate drawing conclusions from them:

-organize data into categories corresponding to the PACCR variables, or into other categories that emerge during the process, so that significant patterns or areas of consensus can be identified;

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-verify data by such processes as triangulation (use of more than one method to obtain the same data), follow-up interviews to confirm if initial understanding was correct, etc; (Note: the URC review that follows the self-study acts in part as a verification of the self-study's findings: part of the URC's process of reviewing the findings will be to determine, by its own investigation, whether or not it would have reached similar conclusions).

3.5.12. In identifying issues, exploring alternatives, and making recommendations, various processes should be considered: comparison of the library to ACRL/ARL standards and statistics, group discusison, position papers, etc.

3.5.13. It is recommended that the steering group meet on a regular basis with the task group leaders in order to monitor progress, co-ordinate activities, resolve any problems that have arisen, assist in gaining access to data or resources, etc. Data of potential relevance to other groups should be shared for overall efficiency.

3.5.13. Each task group will produce a written report of its findings and present them to the co-ordinating group for review and consolidation with other task group reports.

3.6. PHASE FIVE: CONSOLIDATION

3.6.1 The purpose of this phase is two-fold:

i. to identify the key findings and recommendations of each task group report

ii. to consolidate the findings and recommendations of each task group report, for production of the final report; it will be necessary to resolve inconsistencies or possible conflicts among their findings, and deal with any findings or recommendations that have significant or possibly controversial implications (e.g. those which may affect the allocation of resources or the structure of an area, division, or unit)

3.6.2. A process for consolidating the findings and establishing the content of the final report is proposed below. It includes a second retreat.

i. The co-ordinating group and the Chief Librarian conduct an initial review of the findings and recommendations of each task group report for overall appropriateness and feasibility, and

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to identify any apparent conflicts, inconsistencies, or controversial findings. Clarification is obtained from group leaders as required.

ii. Any such concerns should be discussed by the co-ordinating group and the leader of the appropriate task group(s) in order to resolve them if possible. The Chief Librarian may wish to participate in these discussions. Such concerns may also be addressed by the Unit Review Committee.

iii. Produce and distribute an interim report of the findings to MAC and other parties as appropriate as background for the second retreat.

iv. Retreat agenda established by the Chief Librarian and co-ordinating group.

v. Retreat participants identified.

vi. The steering group circulates relevant documentation to each retreat participant. This would consist of either a copy of each task group report or the interim report produced by the co-ordinating group.

vii. Second retreat held. Participants discuss the various findings and recommendations, and attempt to reach a consensus as to the content of the final report. The retreat acts in an advisory capacity to the co-ordinating group and the Chief Librarian, who, in consultation with the group, will retain final authority for deciding on the content and structure of the final report.

viii. Decision reached by co-ordinating group and Chief Librarian as to the content of the final report. Findings or recommendations which may be considered controversial will be handled at the discretion of the Chief Librarian.

3.8. PHASE SIX: REPORTING

3.8.1 In this final phase, the co-ordinating group will compile all of the written documentation produced during the study, and synthesize it into a complete self study report for the system as a whole, for presentation to PACCR.

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RESPONSIBILITY	PRE-PACCR STUDY GROUP (CHIEF LIBRARIAN, MAC)	GRANT KAYLER IN CONSULTATION WITH AREA CO-ORDINATORS, DIVISION HEADS, AND CHIEF LIBRARIAN	PRE-PACCR STUDY GROUP (CHIEF LIBRARIAN, MAC)	SELF-STUDY COORDINATING GROUP, IN CONSULTATION WITH CHIEF LIBRARIAN, MAC	SELF-STUDY COORDINATING GROUP IN CONSULTATION WITH CHIEF LIBRARIAN, MAC		
					TASK GROUPS	COORDINATING GROUP IN CONSULTATION WITH TASK GROUPS, CHIEF LIBRARIAN, MAC	
PROCESS	RETREAT	DEVELOP SELF-STUDY FRAMEWORK	1) SET GOALS/ OBJECTIVES OF SELF-STUDY AND REVIEW 2) ESTABLISH SELF-STUDY COORDINATING GROUP	DESIGN SELF-STUDY	TASK GROUPS : • GATHER DATA • IDENTIFY ISSUES • EXPLORE ALTERNATIVES • MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS • REPORT ON EACH FUNCTION/ SERVICE	CONSOLIDATE FINDINGS OF INDIVIDUAL TASK GROUPS	COMPILE FINDINGS AND WRITE FINAL REPORT
ACTIVITIES	• position papers • group discussions • summary of papers	• review PACCR documents/ interview • literature review • interviews with library staff	• review documents • consultation with library staff, university and faculty personnel, other stakeholders	• use goals and objectives of self-study as basis for design. • identify functions/ services to study (matrix) • establish general procedures for data gathering through to reporting. • establish communication and decision making procedures	• POSSIBILITIES: literature review, interviews, questionnaires, observation, case study, public meetings, group work. • regular communication, among task groups, coordinating groups, library staff generally. • write/input group report.	• review task group reports • distribute reports for response • consolidate findings under key headings (eg.. PACCR topics, retreat topics); interim report • identify conflicting/ controversial findings; resolve through consultation, second retreat, etc.; revise individual reports as required.	• synthesis/ interpretation • secretarial/ word processing • proofreading • binding • printing
TIME FRAME	NOVEMBER 1986	SEPTEMBER 1986 TO APRIL 1988	APRIL, 1988 TO JUNE, 1988	JULY 1988 TO END OF STUDY note: design an ongoing process; activities revised as required during course of study	SEPTEMBER,1988 TO AUGUST, 1989	SEPTEMBER, 1989 TO MARCH, 1990	APRIL, 1990 TO AUGUST, 1990

FIGURE 7. Time Frame / Critical Path for Self-Study

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3.8.2. A system for entering the task group reports into a word processing system as they are produced, and a schedule for producing these reports should be established during the design phase, so that there is an efficient process for consolidating them into the final report. In this sense, the reporting process can be seen as taking place throughout the study.

4. BUDGET

4.1. The cost of the self-study will largely be hidden, as th main cost will likely be staff time.

4.2. The library may wish, however, to consider budgeting for additional staff to ease the workload and make the process more efficient: e.g. research assistant, writer/ editor to assist with the reports, extra secretarial or data entry assistance to input the reports, etc.

Other possible costs, such as cassette tapes for interviews, room bookings, and refreshments for major special meetings, should also be considered.

4.3. PACCR provides approximately $300.00 to produce and print the required number of copies of the self-study report.

5. TIME FRAME

Figure 7. outlines a proposed time frame for the various phases of the self-study described in the framework.

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The project accomplished its goal of developing a framework for the University of Alberta Library's PACCR self-study. Initial indicators are that the framework will be useful for drawing attention to the kinds of issues that will need to be addressed in order for the review to be carried out successfully. The project also succeeded in raising senior library staff's overall awareness of the review process, the kinds of activities it would likely involve, and the possible effects it might have on them. The project also provided the author, relativley new to large academic libraries, with a unique opportunity to learn more about how the system operated and to test his ideas against those of more experienced colleagues.

The process of conducting the project was somewhat unusual. Rather than gather all the necessary data first and then develop the framework, an initial part of the necessary data was gathered and used to develop a draft framework. This draft was subjected to analysis and revision through an interview process and further review of the literature. This provided the remaining data necessary to develop a revised draft. Thus, the process involved a considerable degree of interation between the two main sources of data, the literature and senior library staff. This process was perhaps somewhat less efficient than a more linear approach. However, in the opinion of the author, it achieved an effective balance of theory and practical application which was necessary to accomplish the goals of the project.

It is unclear at this point how the framework will actually be used. This is to be expected, as it is only one of a number

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of possible approaches to be considered. Library administration is currently investigating the possibility of conducting a more comprehensive planning process. This process would incorporate but possibly alter the usual PACCR review on which this framework is based. If this were to occur, it is unlikely that the framework would be applied in its current form. It appears more likely at this point that individual sections would be referred to for ideas and possible procedures that would be potentially relevant to a particular phase of the more comprehensive planning process. Thus, while the framework may not be applied in a way that was originally anticipated, portions of it may be useful in a new and expanded context. Whatever its final disposition, it is clear that the framework has helped to raise staff awareness of the upcoming PACCR review and how it might be conducted.

The project also suggested that as a direction for further research, the question of what constitutes library effectiveness and how it can be measured accurately should be explored further. The role of criteria other than the traditional quantitative indicators in determining effectiveness would be a major focus of such a study.

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APPENDIX A.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your overall reaction to the proposed framework? Do you feel that the general approach and specific procedures developed so far would be effective in the U of A library environment? If not, what kinds of changes might you suggest to make it more useful?

2. What do you feel is the most important purpose of the library's upcoming PACCR review with respect to the library's current needs and stage of development? Stated another way, what would you like to see the PACCR review accomplish?

3. How, in your opinion, could the PACCR review be designed to best reflect the decentralized nature of the library system, and yet be able ultimately to develop a picture of the system as a whole? For example, should individual units (e.g. area libraries, technical service units, administrative units) conduct self-studies of their own operations, or, by contrast, should the library de-emphasize individual administrative units and concentrate instead on functions and services performed by various parts of the system (e.g. reference, bibliographic instruction, personnel)? In answering this question, please consider how you would define a system-wide function in the U of A library context and, based on this definition, what you would consider to be system-wide functions.

4. With respect to #3 above, are there any administrative units or functions/services which you feel need special attention and which should, therefore, be given high priority during the self-study? (see matrix in Appendix A of the proposed framework, which identifies all of the possible units/functions/services)

5. Of the seven items which PACCR wishes the library to review (history, current status, impending changes, objectives, strengths, limitations or weaknesses, and areas for improvement), which in your opinion are the most important for the library and should, therefore, be given high priority during the review?

6. Do you have any concerns about the review - e.g. its objectives or procedures, time required, staff responsibilities, etc.?

7. How involved do you feel library staff should be in the review? Are there any aspects of the process which are of particular interest to you?

8. Do you feel that task groups would be an effective

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structure for carrying out the review? If so, what do you feel would be an appropriate composition of such groups? If not, could you suggest other structures or processes that might be effective?

9. Have any important variables been omitted from the matrix? If so, please identify.

10. Should the review examine the question of what constitutes library effectiveness in the university setting?

11. Should the library incorporate aspects of the Education Faculty's planning process into its PACCR review design?

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PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR THE SELF-STUDY PORTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY PACCR REVIEW

Grant Kayler

July, 1987

A. INTRODUCTION

The following document describes a proposed framework for the self-study portion of the library system's upcoming PACCR review. The professional literature on self-study reviews in higher education indicates that such a framework, developed as part of the pre-study planning, assists the review in proceeding efficiently and generating valuable information. Due to the U of A library's size, complexity, and diversity of activity, the self-study promises to be a large task, and such a framework would appear to be particularly useful for the library.

The task of developing this proposed framework has been approved by library administration, and is being carried out as part of the requirements of the author's masters program in educational administration. It is recognized that due to the complexity of the library system and the variety of staff interests and viewpoints it represents, there will likely be a number of different views as to how the review should be conducted. For example, rather than, as this framework suggests, conduct reviews of individual units first and then move to the system level, one could also consider reviewing specific functions across the system right from the beginning. Such an approach might be more complex, but it might also be able to generate a more integrated picture of the system as a whole. The framework proposed here should, therefore, be considered as only one of a number of possibilities, a starting point that will at least stimulate thought and discussion. As part of its development, the author plans to discuss it with selected library staff in order to determine its feasibility, and to suggest possible modifications or alternatives. The literature on self-study design also indicates that the procedures by which the study is carried out should to some extent emerge during the study itself, in order that they be flexible and responsive to needs that may arise during the course of the study. The framework proposed here offers some degree of flexibility, but more could likely be incorporated.

It should be clarified at this point that while the development of this framework has the approval of library administration, the library is in no way bound to follow the proposed framework. It may use the framework fully, in part, or not at all. It is hoped that it will, however, at least use the framework as a starting point to help focus the discussion of what the review should achieve and how it will achieve it.

B. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE REVIEW

1. The Commissioning Organization

- the University of Alberta, through the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Reviews (PACCR), in conjunction with the University of Alberta Library

2. Unit to be Reviewed

- the University of Alberta Library

3. The Reviewing Body

- the first stage of the PACCR review, for which this framework is designed, is a self-study - therefore, the reviewing body for this stage is the library itself

- the second stage of the review will employ an external reviewing body called the Unit Review Committee (URC), but for purposes of the self-study, the library itself is the reviewing body

4. Reasons for the Review

- the University, through the vehicle of PACCR, requires that each unit (e.g. academic department, service unit, or administrative unit) conduct a review of its activities in order to generate information about specific improvements in its operations or services, and to provide the university with a variety of information about the unit that will be useful for planning

5. Specific Purposes to be Served by the Self-Study Report

- the three main purposes of the report, as far as PACCR is concerned, are as follows:

  i. to provide PACCR and the URC with a description of the unit's past, present, future, objectives, strengths, limitations or weaknesses, and areas for improvement which it will incorporate into its own review process

  ii. to provide the university with planning information

  iii. to assist the library in gaining a greater awareness of itself, where it is heading, and how it might improve its programs and services in light of new demands

- in addition to these three purposes, the author of this framework suggests that a fourth purpose be considered:

  iv. to assist the library in exploring what is meant by library effectiveness, with emphasis on the university setting; the issue of effectiveness is of ongoing concern to the

library profession, and such an approach would, in the author's opinion, expand the scope of the review and make it possible for the University of Alberta library to make a valuable contribution to the library profession's understanding of this key issue

B. SELF-STUDY REVIEW FRAMEWORK

1. Overview of the Design and Underlying Assumptions

- the conceptual element of the framework is derived primarily from the guidelines issued by PACCR on how it expects the reviews to be conducted; PACCR is primarily a qualitative, rather than quantitative, process, although it does expect some quantitative data, where available and appropriate, to support the findings; this framework proposes a primarily qualitative approach as well, the key characteristics of which are as follows: use of the natural setting as the direct source of data; rich description, using a variety of kinds of data; concern with process as well as product or outcome; inductive analysis of data; and emphasis on the meanings of the program being studied, as perceived by the various audiences or groups that have an interest in it;

- in addition, should the library decide to explore the question of library effectiveness, the qualitative methods of the PACCR process should also be effective in exploring such issues as changing needs of users, the value of the library as percieved by users, and other aspects of effectiveness which go beyond the traditional quantitative indicators such as collection size, number of questions answered, number of items circulated; the aim of this aspect of the review would not be to actually assess the library's effectiveness in these new terms, but rather to help clarify what some of these new criteria are for assessing library effectiveness in the information age; if such criteria were to be developed during the review, they could then be monitored after the review, as part of the library's ongoing activity, to determine how useful they actually are as indicators of effectiveness

2. Matrix Representation of the Proposed Framework

- see Appendix A

- the matrix which was designed by the author as part of the framework, is a three dimensional representation of the major variables that would be considered in the review:

  i. the administrative units that make up the system, consisting of either areas that have direct contact with users and serve a specific subject or function (e.g. area libraries, special collections), or units which do not provide services directly to users but provide some form of support service

to the library as a whole (e.g. systems, personnel, administration)

ii. the operations, functions, and services performed by the system

iii. the PACCR variables (history, present status, impending changes, objectives, strengths, limitations, and areas for improvement)

iv. the project management variables that represent the sequence of processes to be carried out to complete the review (purpose and objectives, design, mobilization, data gathering and analysis, issue identification, alternative generation, making recommendations, and reporting)

- the purpose of the matrix is to identify the range of topics that could be considered during the review, and to link them together in a generalized structure that would help to guide and co-ordinate the self-study process

- each imaginary box of the cube will therefore have three components: an administrative unit component, a function or service component, and a PACCR review component - e.g. the history of the reference services of the Humanities and Social Sciences Library; this suggests that in carrying out the review, one would start by selecting a box in the matrix that represents a combination of three specific variables one wishes to study from all the possibilities, and proceed to study that topic; theoretically, if each side of the matrix lists all of the possible elements of that variable, then all of the possible combinations are represented, making it a type of checklist to ensure the completeness of the review; some of the boxes will be more relevant than others; decisions as to which to emphasize should be made during the design phase, and should reflect the needs of the unit or other considerations; flexibility of application should result from this design - it is not meant to be followed rigidly but rather to be used as a guide and checklist

- the matrix indicates that there are seven PACCR variables, fifteen administrative unit variables, and fifteen operation/service variables, for a total of 1575 cubes, or three-variable combinations (7 X 15 X 15); clearly, there is no intention that every one of the cubes be considered; in practice, were this matrix to be used, one of the procedures of the design phase (see Section C, Phase 2) would be to determine which of the questions would be answered, and what the priorities would be among the questions; in determining which questions would be answered, the library might consider grouping related questions; however, doing so may make it difficult to look closely at a function that needs attention; thus, if a specific operation or service was given high priority, it would likely be advisable to make the questions pertaining to it as specific as possible

-when discussing the framework, staff will be asked to indicate which aspects of the library's operation they feel should receive high priority during the self-study; based on the results, high priority questions will be identified from the range of possibiliities represented by the matrix - these questions can then be used in phase 4, Gathering and Analyzing the Data (see Section C)

-as part of the process of determining which are the high priority questions, it would be useful to identify which questions pertain to the system as a whole, and which would pertain more to an individual administrative unit within the system, be it an area library, an operational unit such as acquisitions, or an administrative support unit such as personnel; the fact that a question pertained to the system as a whole would be one criteria for considering it a high priority question

-however, it would be necessary first to clarify what meant by a system-wide function, although this is not as easy as it first appears; for example, a system function could be one that effects the entire system (e.g. database management), or it could be one that is performed to some degree by all, or most, parts of the system (e.g. personnel); furthermore, both of these functions, plus a number of others, are also co-ordinated by a distinct administrative unit, which further blurs the distinction between a system and an individual unit function; it would appear that the most workable definition would be a function which is performed by all, or most, of the divisions within the system; it may also be useful to group together those functions which are performed by a significant number of divisions - e.g the public services performed by the area libraries; while these would not be considered system functions according to the definition above, they do constitute a kind of sub-system of functions which may, due to their direct contact with users, merit special attention during the review

C. CONDUCTING THE SELF-STUDY USING THE FRAMEWORK

-the process for conducting the review outlined in this section is based on the following processes common to project management:

1. stating the purpose and objectives of the self-study
2. designing the self-study
3. mobilizing the self-study
4. gathering and analyzing data

    -i.e. data that describes the operations and services of the unit being studied, and answers the questions developed from the matrix, as described in the

5. identifying issues from the data

   -i.e. problems that the unit should consider trying to resolve, or constraints that it cannot change but should try to accommodate in a way that reduces their negative impact

6. generating alternatives to resolve the issues

   -i.e. possible alternatives for resolving the problems or accomodating the constraints

7. making recommendations from among the alternatives

   -i.e. choosing the alternatives that appear to be the most effective

8. reporting

   -i.e. producing a written report of the study for the library and PACCR

-how these eight processes would be carried out during the course of the library's self-study is outlined below:

Phase #1: Stating the Purpose and Objectives of the Self-Study

-the purpose of this phase is to clarify why the review is being undertaken, and what the library wishes it to accomplish

-Sections A, B, and C of this document as well as the project proposal provide information that will assist in determining the purpose and objectives of the review; however, it is recommended that the library go through the full process of clarifying the purpose and specific objectives of the review in order to gain a consensus and increase staff involvement in the planning process

-In developing its specific objectives, the library should begin with the seven main objectives established by PACCR:

1. Describe the history of the library.
2. Describe the current status of the library.
3. Identify and describe the impending changes which the library will likely have to face in the future.
4. Identify the objectives of the library.
5. Identify and describe the strengths of the library.
6. Identify and describe the limitations or weaknesses

of the library.

7. Identify and describe areas for improvement of the library's operations or services.

-the library, however, may have a number of it own objectives which would derive from the seven identified above, but would relate to current specific needs that it may wish to address during the self-study; these should be developed and listed during this phase; a clear and complete list of objectives is the foundation of the whole self-study process, as they are the basis of the design, and serve to keep the project on track

Phase #2: Designing the Self-Study

-the purpose of this phase is to determine how the self-study will be carried out; the proposed framework that is presented in this document is one example of what would be developed during this phase

-the design, and the objectives on which it is based, link the various activities of the self-study in an overall structure; this structure should be compatible with the organizational structure of the library, and it should be flexible so that unforseen circumstances can be accommodated effectively; if necessary, the original design can be modified during the course of the review

-some of the features which the design might include are as follows: an individual or group responsible for the overall direction of the study; task groups charged with specific responsibilities; lines of authority and communications for carrying out tasks, keeping participants informed, and making decisions; methods of gathering data; sources of data; processes for identifying issues, generating alternatives, and making recommendations regarding possible improvements; etc.

-a body of literature on self-study and evaluation suggests that the individuals whose activities are to be reviewed should be involved to some extent in the design of the review; the nature and degree of this involvement will vary accordinng to what is considered appropriate and feasible by library administration; as indicated above, staff input will be sought in developing this framework

-it is recommended that procedures for data gathering and analysis, as described in Phase 4 below, be developed in detail during the design phase; procedures for issue identification, alternative generation, making recommendations, and reporting should also be examined, although these may be left until the self-study has moved closer to these phases

Phase #3: Mobilization

- the purpose of this phase is to get the review underway
- the following kinds of activities would be appropriate for this purpose:
  - written communication to all library staff informing them that the review is about to begin
  - meetings with those who will be involved to clarify the purpose, objectives, and design of the review, and to discuss any concerns or questions; staff will support the process more strongly if they are clear on what the review is designed to accomplish and how it will be carried out
  - clarification of projected time frame, communications and reporting structures, and related administrative matters
  - assignment of the first tasks to the appropriate group(s) or individual(s) as specified by the design, with deadlines for completion

Phase #4: Gathering and Analyzing Data

- using the model introduced above to assist in identifying the topics to be studied, each administrative unit will gather data that describe the history, current status, impending changes, objectives, strengths, and limitations of the unit with respect to the operations it performs or the services it provides
- to do this, the unit must first identify sources of data; potential sources include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - library users: students, faculty, non-university personnel (e.g. holders of external borrower cards)
  - library staff: professional librarians, non-academic staff, administrative and professional officers, systems analysts, etc.
  - university personnel, other than library staff or users, who have an interest in the library (e.g. faculty administrators, such as Deans or Department Chairs, who may not be regular library users but who have an interest in its activities)
  - documents generated by the library system or the university: historical or archival records; mission, goals, or objectives statements where they exist; policy and procedure documents; annual reports; reports of committees, councils, task forces, special projects; statistical records; comments and suggestions written by users; non-confidential personnel documents; etc.

-personnel or documents of the various networks that the library participates in or is in some way associated with - e.g. bibliographic networks for resource sharing, cataloguing, document delivery, etc.; telecommunications networks for transmitting information, messages, etc. collegial and professional networks fostering the sharing of ideas and providing professional support; etc.

-the literature on academic libraries or other relevant topics

-the library should consider the number of individuals it will need to consult in order to obtain valid data on what the different stakeholders (e.g. staff, students, faculty) feel are its strengths, limitations, etc. guidelines need to be established in order to have confidence in the data; the author will be investigating further this aspect of the framework before making any recommendations;

-next, the unit would locate or develop its own instruments or procedures that it feels would be effective in gathering data about its operation; potential instruments or procedures include the following:

-interviews, using a variety of types of questions - e.g. open-ended, semi-structured, structured

-questionnaires, also using a variety of questions

-public hearings

-observation of library activities

-content analysis of library or other relevant documents

-literature review

-the task of developing data gathering questions based on the study's objectives was introduced above in Section B.2. the study developed in Phase #1; the questions should be complete, and able to gather all of the information necessary to accomplish each objective and sub-objective; the seven main data gathering questions, based on the PACCR objectives, would be as follows:

1. What is the history of the library system?

2. What is the current status of the library system?

3. What are the impending changes facing the library system?

4. What are the goals and objectives of the library system?

5. What are the strengths of the library system?

6. What are the limitations or weaknesses of the library system?

7. How can the library system improve?

-as indicated in Phase #1, the library will likely wish to develop specific objectives for each of the seven main PACCR objectives; in turn, specific data gathering questions should be developed for each of these, and added to the list of questions above

-the unit may also wish, as suggested earlier, to explore the issue of library effectiveness in the academic setting; if so, an eighth main question can be added:

8. How can one define library effectiveness as it relates to the University of Alberta Library?

-data gathering may be organized by the use of a data management chart (see Appendix B)

-once the data has been gathered, it should be analyzed - i.e. organized so as to facilitate drawing conclusions from it - as follows:

-organize data into categories corresponding to the PACCR variables, or into other significant categories that emerge during the process, so that patterns begin to emerge and the data can be interpreted

-verify data by such processes as triangulation (i.e. use of more than one method to obtain the same data), follow-up interviews, etc.

-(it should also be noted that the URC review which follows the self-study serves as a verification of the findings of the self-study report, in that the URC will likely wish to confirm some of the self-study's more significant findings through their own investigations)

-if, as suggested, the unit does choose to address the issue of effectiveness, it could consider some of the following questions: What does it consist of? Is it measurable, and if so, how? What other criteria may be used to indicate it? the definition of effectiveness developed by Du Mont and Du Mont (1979: 132-133) may serve as a guide in this regard; it suggests that effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which library transactions correspond to expectations over time

-it is also suggested that in collecting data, the unit use a general systems model such as the one illustrated in Appendix C; the systems model is a useful tool for conceptualizing the library as a integrated operation, and

for drawing attention to forces in the library's environment which may have a bearing on its internal operations or its public services; use of the systems model will also help the various units to gather similar types of data, thereby making it easier to compare findings across the system at a later stage of the review

Phases 5-7: Identify Issues, Generate Alternatives, and Make Recommendations

-having gathered, analyzed, and reported information on the past, present, future, objectives, strengths, and limitations of the unit, as outlined under phase #1 above, the unit can now proceed to explore ways it might improve its operation, the final stage of its self-study; this can be accomplished by the next three phases of the project management process: identifying issues, generating alternatives, and making recommendations;

-an issue can be an internal element of the unit's operation that is cause for concern (e.g. deterioration of the collection) or it can be an external development, such as the rapid increase in serial costs

-to some extent, the process of identifying issues will have already begun, as the limitations described in the unit reports can be considered issues

-once issues are identified, alternatives are generated which may help to either resolve the issue or else enable the unit to accommodate it in a way that reduces its negative impact

-from among the possible alternatives, recommendations are made as to those alternatives which appear to hold the most promise; recommendations can be either short term tactics to resolve immediate concerns or longer term strategies to address more fundamental issues

-these recommendations constitute the suggestions for improvements which make up the last phase of the self-study

-at this point, each of the administrative areas of the system will have completed what is in effect a mini-PACCR review of its operation; the next phase suggested is a second progression through the the three phases of issue identification, alternative generation, and making recommendations, but this time for the system as a whole, using the information from the individual area reports; if the individual self-studies have been carried out in a reasonably similar fashion - e.g. using this or another such framework - it should be possible to look for similarities and differences in their findings across the system; it is this comparison and synthesis of the findings at the system level

that the framework suggests be undertaken at this point

-to accomplish this shift from the individual area level to the system level would no doubt require considerable effort and an effective process that synthesizes the findings of the individual reports into a whole; on one hand this can be viewed primarily as a technical task that involves taking the data of the individual reports on the various topics studied (e.g. history, etc.), and consolidating it under similar categories in a system report; in reality, however, there would likely need to be a considerable degree of discussion and interpretation before a system-wide consensus could be reached as to what the major issues are and what types of possible improvements would be appropriate to resolve them; the proposed model does not at this point suggest a process for accomplishing this synthesis; however, it is an aspect which the author would like to discuss with library staff in order to determine if such a process should be included in the framework

Phase #8: Reporting

-during this final phase, the library would compile all of the written documentation produced during the review, and synthesize it into a complete self-study report for presentation to PACCR

-a system for entering the various reports as they are produced onto a chosen word processing system should be established before the review begins; this will facilitate the integration of the various individual reports into the final report

D. MANAGEMENT OF THE REVIEW

1. Governance and Structure

a. Governance

-the self-study will be goverened by the regulations established by the University through PACCR, and by relevant policies and procedures of the library system

b. Structure

-it will likely be necessary to set up some form of temporary administrative structure designed to co-ordinate the self-study; it is recommended that the Chief Librarian be responsible for establishing this structure

-the literature on review processes in higher education suggests that the review structure should address such concerns as effective communications among participants, decision-making procedures to resolve problems that arise,

lines of authority among the various participants in the review

-H. R. Kells (1983: 57-58) suggests in Self-Study Processes: a Guide for Post-Secondary Institutions (2nd ed.), that a Steering Group be established to co-ordinate the review; functions of the group would vary depending on the design of the self-study, but in general they would include the following kinds of activities: defining the specific tasks; establishing work groups to carry out these tasks; implementing lines of authority, reporting, and communication; establishing and monitoring schedules and sequences of activities to ensure efficiency and smooth progress; providing consultation and assistance; making decisions in accordance with its terms of reference; etc.

-Appendix D provides a flowchart from Kells (pp. 33) that outlines a generalized post-secondary self-study process; the activities of the Steering Group would fall under the section of the chart entitled "Organize the Study"

-it is also suggested that the library consider using a microcomputer program such as MACPROJECT to assist in managing the self-study - such programs can be used to develop critical path network charts and other tools to help monitor progress and eliminate bottlenecks by ensuring that events are carried out in proper sequence

2. Time Frame

-other than the fact that the review will likely begin in 1988, a specific beginning date has not yet been established; therefore, this framework will not recommend a time frame for conducting the review at this point;

-it is possible, however, to estimate the time it will take to conduct the two phases of the self-study, as follows:

-individual area reviews: 6 months to 1 year

-system-level synthesis and consolidation: 10 months

3. Budget

-the cost of the self-study will largely be hidden, as the main cost will likely be staff time

-the library may wish, however, to consider budgeting for additional staff to ease the workload and make the process more efficient: e.g. a research assistant, a writer/editor to assist with the main report, extra secreterial or data entry assistance to input the main report, etc;

-other costs, such as cassette tapes for interviews and room booking and refreshments for major special meetings that might be required, should also be considered

APPENDIX A: MATRIX OF VARIABLES COVERED BY SELF-STUDY

APPENDIX B

DATA COLLECTION MANAGEMENT CHART

QUESTION	DATA SOURCES	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES	COMMENTS

What is the history of the Herbert T. Coutts Library?	- staff (present and former)
	- documents
	  - Coutts Library files
	  - system files
	  - library or archive materials
		- interviews
		- document search/ analysis
		- library search
			- sample size
			- methods for obtaining acce to data sourc
			- time/cost consid ations in gaini access to or collecting dat (eg tape recor

What are the Strengths/Limitations of the Herbert T. Coutts Library?	- staff
	- users
	  - students
	  - faculty
	  - external borrowers
	  - etc.
	- documents
	  - user comments
	  - correspondence
		- interviews
		- questionnaires
		- document search/ analysis	

APPENDIX C

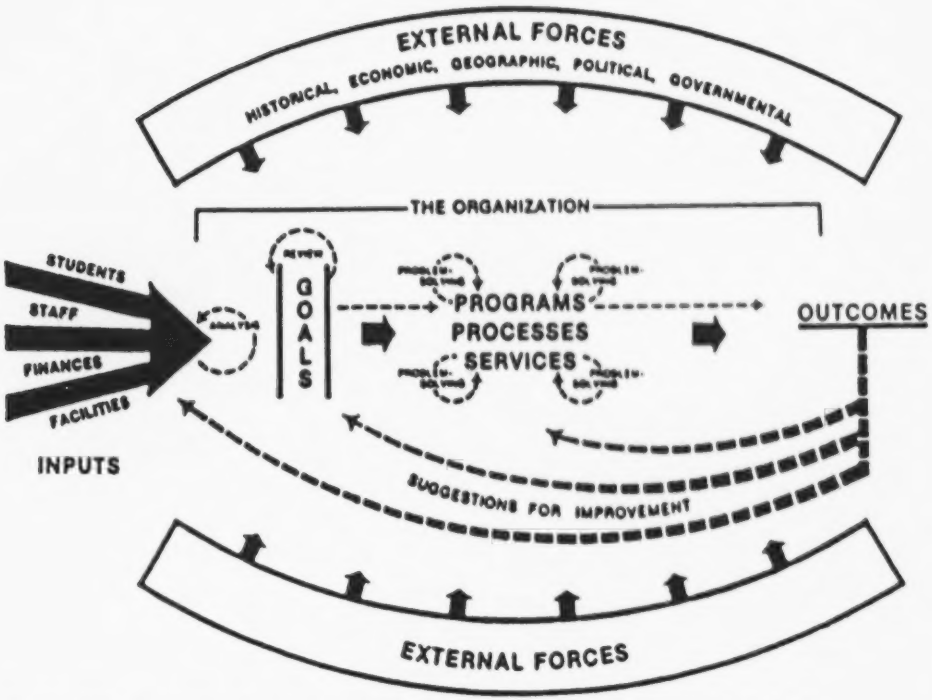

Figure 3.1. The general linear systems model depicting the organization, its environment, and the study elements (broken lines).

From:

Kells, H.R. Self-Study Processes: A Guide for Post-Secondary Institutions. 2nd ed. New York: American Council on Education/ Macmillan, 1983.

APPENDIX D

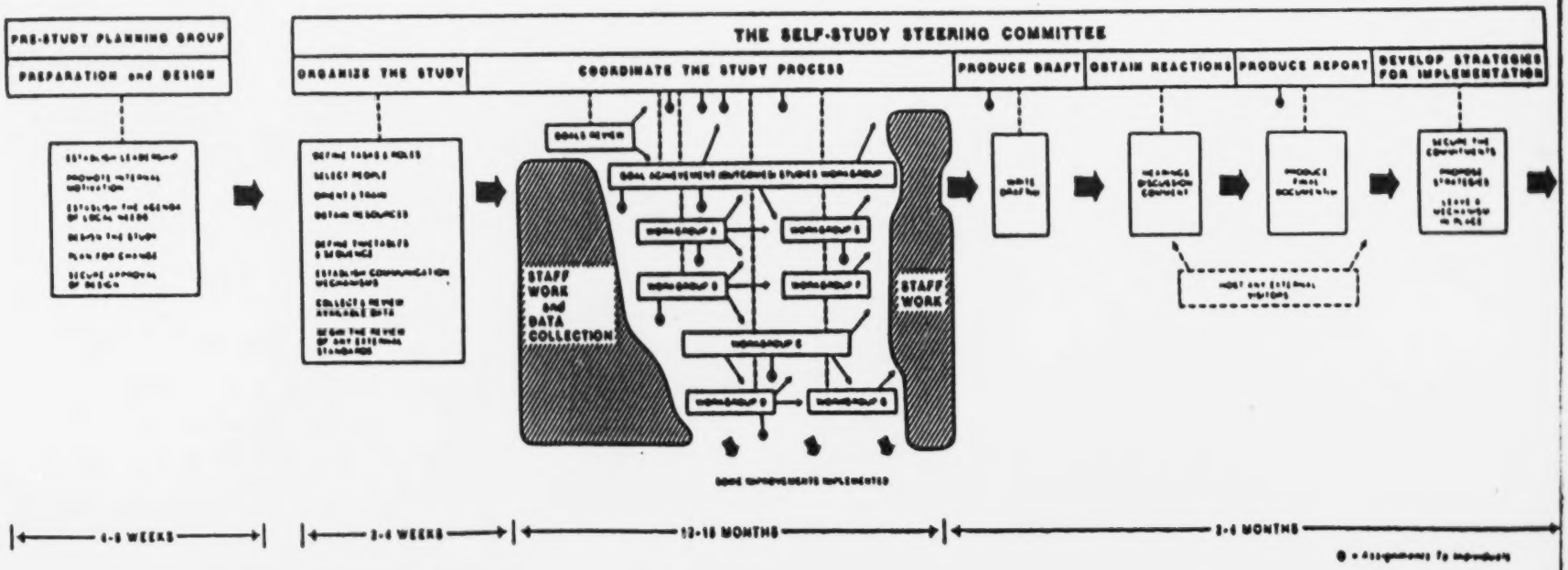

Figure 4.1. Flow diagram of an entire self-study process.

From:

Kells, H. R. Self-Study Processes: A Guide for Post-Secondary Institutions, 2nd ed. New York: American Council on Education/ Macmillan, 1983.